AMERICAN LITERATURE AND THE NEW PURITAN STUDIES

This book contains thirteen original essays about Puritan culture in colonial New England. Prompted by the growing interest in secular studies, as well as postnational, transnational, and postcolonial critique in the humanities, *American Literature and the New Puritan Studies* seeks to represent and advance contemporary interest in a field long recognized, however problematically, as foundational to the study of American literature. It invites readers of American literature and culture to reconsider the role of seventeenth-century Puritanism in the creation of the United States of America and its consequent cultural and literary histories. It also records the significant transformation in the field of Puritan studies that has taken place in the last quarter century. In addition to re-reading well known texts of seventeenth-century Puritan New England, the volume contains essays focused on unknown or lesser-studied events and texts, as well as new scholarship on post-Puritan archives, monuments, and historiography.

BRYCE TRAISTER is a Professor of English at the University of British Columbia (Okanagan). He holds a PhD in English from the University of California, Berkeley. He has published widely on American literary studies and methodology. He is the author of *Female Piety and the Invention of American Puritanism* (2016) and is a past president of the Canadian Association of American Studies.

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EDITED BY

BRYCE TRAISTER

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: The New Puritan Studies

Bryce Traister

> Tombstones. Statues. A portrait of an overdressed Divine.
> Pirates. Laughter. An adolescent Algonquian trickster.
> Linguistics. Antiquarianism. Salvation and sovereignty.
> Mexico. Constantinople. Rome.

These are not the usual suspects of "American Puritanism," and we are not finding them in the usual places these days. Scholars are also reading them now in a variety of non-literary media, and from multiple and unconventional perspectives that challenge us to reconsider our received knowledge about New England Puritanism's formative place within a United States national culture. Taken together, they constitute the New Puritan Studies, and offer potential new narratives of American literary and cultural history. Welcome to *American Literature and the New Puritan Studies*.

This book contains twelve original essays about Puritan culture in colonial New England. Written by both established and emerging scholars, the chapters range broadly in terms of object, disciplinary method, and historical scope. Viewed as a whole, they reflect and sharpen the terrain we have historically labeled "American Puritanism," even as each of these chapters complicates our conventional wisdom about such matters. For professional readers of this cultural history, both Puritanism and the other term of our title, "American Literature," have served for many years now as the straw argument opener for countless articles and books about the United States seeking to declare something new, bold, or critical about the country and its academic study.[1] In many of these accounts, the settlement culture of New England still remains the "New England Mind" of Perry Miller, or the "American Jeremiad" of Sacvan Bercovitch, an apparently monological and self-provincializing historical fiction of an everlastingly white, mostly male, narrowly nationalist, and broadly Protestant America. There are, as we shall see in the following pages, good reasons to remain alert to the ways in which the country's

Puritan past continues to inform contemporary narratives of political power, including a religiously inflected nationalism that has come to dominate American politics in the early years of the twenty-first century. At the same time, even asserting that there was or is such an influence at all has become a suspicious and assailable claim, one contemporary academic readers of American literature and culture have been aggressively interrogating for the last twenty-five years or so.[2]

The collective authorship of *American Literature and the New Puritan Studies* offers, in the first place, an invitation to readers of American literature and culture to reconsider the role of seventeenth-century Puritanism in the creation of the United States of America and its consequent cultural and literary histories. What New England Puritanism actually was as a historical object both informs and misinforms the stories we have told about the country's Puritan past, and continue to tell about that past today. That is, both scholarly and popular readers today rely a great deal on histories and narratives told by earlier readers of the Puritan past. Thanks to Arthur Miller's Cold War–era play, *The Crucible*, for example, a certain version of American Puritanism as a politically paranoid and legally unjust culture remains popular today. In the nineteenth century, American historians constructed a Puritan past that aligned its religious ambitions with the progressive narrative of American expansion popularly known as "manifest destiny." One of this book's more prominent claims, pursued particularly in Part III on "Puritan Afterlives," is that the New Puritan Studies takes an interest not just in the historical objects and texts of the seventeenth century, but in the stories subsequently told about those objects by later generations of American readers seeking to determine the significance of American Puritanism to the national script.

Still other chapters in this book attempt to get under and behind these popular versions of Puritanism by focusing on lesser studied events and texts. We are familiar, for example, with how certain genres of New England settlement culture – the conversion relation, the captivity narrative, the sermon, the lyric poem – have served as the vehicles through which the nation constructed its back story. We have less knowledge about how other media – tombstones, portraiture, indigenous communicative practices, to name only a few – promoted and resisted these familiar prenational narratives. By gathering these chapters and their quite different perspectives into one location, the book invites its readers to establish new pathways not only back into this rich historical archive, but also into new narratives of national culture and literary production. If, as some would have it, the "Puritan origins thesis" led inevitably into the governing

narrative of a uniquely exceptional America, the New Puritan Studies challenges us to rethink not just the national exceptionalism story, but the ways in which both that storytelling and its robust critique have tended to ignore the diversity of voices, perspectives, beliefs, and ambitions that constitute the scholarship of colonial American Puritan studies today.

A second reason for producing this book is to record the significant transformation in the field of Puritan studies that has taken place in the last quarter century. We shall return shortly to a more detailed discussion of the renaissance in Puritan scholarship. For now, suffice it to observe that the contours of this newer scholarship, its preoccupations, deviations, and interventions, have helped to sharpen the significance of colonial American religious culture and history, both on its own terms and more broadly in terms of American studies practice today. It is worth emphasizing that the "New" label does not mean a complete break with the "Old." A striking feature of the New Puritan Studies is its respectful reliance on (as opposed, say, to polemical disavowal of) the well-known scholarly foundations of the field. Many of the chapters in this book, moreover, practice recognizable methods of "old school" literary analysis and historiography to arrive at new school claims about colonial Puritanism. This new scholarship of colonial Puritanism will thus enable and enrich rather than diminish and confine the study of American literature and culture. The New Puritan Studies has become too methodologically diverse, geographically far-flung, and linguistically polyvocal to fit into a single box – or even single book, for that matter.

This book, viewed as a whole, makes the case for considering the scholarship of the New Puritan Studies as a useful provocation to contemporary Americanist critical practice. In broader "New American Studies" scholarship, foundational narratives of nation-based literary and cultural study were, and still are, being seriously questioned. Americanist critique deepened its commitment to reject "American literature" as "a self-evident field" and to "contest the unifying impulse of nation formation" secured by nationalist literary history.[3] By the time some were beginning to notice the disappearance of what had once been a significant feature of the Americanist critical imaginary – the study of religion – others were arguing that a nation-based Americanist literary and cultural history should follow religion into the afterlife.[4] These two movements – the critique of a nation-based literary studies model, and the decline of the analysis of religion in Americanist critical practice – have together opened the door for the return of an American Puritan studies that does not simply align itself either with a discarded "Puritan origins thesis" or with a nationalist brand of cultural,

literary, or historical study. Perhaps unwittingly, Americanist post-nationalism has offered "the nation" – however contested – a front-row seat on the contemporary critical stage at exactly the same time that the new interest in religion has emerged as a vital language of post-nationalist global critique. In short: these chapters collectively establish that American Puritanism does not lead inexorably into a singularly exceptionalist American state and culture. In fact, it may never have.

Secularism and the New Puritan Studies

In 2011, Yale University Press reissued Sacvan Bercovitch's *The Puritan Origins of the American Self*, first published in 1974. There are doubtless many reasons to republish a field-defining study like this, but any Americanist even conversationally familiar with the last twenty years or so of the field's disciplinary polemic would challenge the idea that "Puritan," "Origins," "American," and "Self" are terms that, however combined, could still be said to frame the field of early American studies in the twenty-first century. Puritanism may well never have been the significant story of immigrant settlement in the seventeenth-century Atlantic colonies, the beginning of a national story of religious and political freedom-seeking, or even a predictive story of American ideological development, as Bercovitch argued in *Puritan Origins* and elsewhere. Such "Origins" stories have become deeply suspect. In the twenty-first century, many believe that the "Puritan origins thesis" underwrites an inveterate American exceptionalism that still grips the national storyline. Indeed, to hear some tell it, the fetishistic commitment to the "nation" exerts a kind of pre-determining force on scholarship, one that holds "futurity" in a state of bondage to outcomes already predicated by a nationalist, exceptionalist narrative of America first articulated within American Puritan Studies.[5] If the Bercovitch reissue is anything like a fair indicator, however, it would appear that American Puritan studies is back in the mix, and with its return we have occasion to reflect on the place of colonial Puritanism in contemporary Americanist scholarship.[6]

To a considerable extent, the resurgence of scholarly interest in seventeenth-century Puritan cultures of religion, contact, and settlement in New England has been propelled by the emergence of a new "secular studies" across the humanities and social sciences. In fact, and somewhat counterintuitively, a broad interrogation of the classical thesis of secularization in the West has issued a reparative discourse for the study of religion in literature and other cultural forms; religion is once again a credible

object of study within the broader humanities and social sciences. To be sure, the disciplines grouped within specific practices of academic religious studies have always remained focused on religion. What some are now calling a new secular studies has fueled a return to religion in a wide range of presumptively secular humanities and social science disciplines. Broadly speaking, this work has collectively argued for a whole-scale revision to the so-called secularization thesis imagined in the European enlightenment and confirmed by its successors in nineteenth-century classical sociology. The secularization thesis or "narrative" more or less defined modernity as the absence or subtraction of religion, told how the emergence of modern capitalism rendered religion irrelevant, and articulated ideas about how a bourgeois public and democratic order of modern nationhood replaced older ideas that connected nation and political order to transcendent systems of belief and cosmology.[7]

Few of us accept this totalizing secularization narrative today. The academic study of religious history and culture has taken up a "post-secular" perspective which holds that secularism is itself a condition of belief in a historically bounded period of roughly two hundred years. It is coincident with modern liberalism and revolutionary democracy, as well as the categories of public and private experience on which liberal concepts of modern selfhood depend. A post-secular cultural critique assumes overlapping accounts of religious and non-religious ways of knowing. It views the elaboration of modern secularity as itself an ideological and political ambition. And it reads religious and secular historical, political, and intellectual formations as co-extensive, mutually constitutive, and structurally interwoven. In Talal Asad's words, "The secular is neither continuous with the religion that supposedly preceded it . . . nor a simple break from it." At the same time, "there is nothing essentially religious, nor any universal essence that defines 'sacred language' or 'sacred experience'."[8] While there are important distinctions to be made between a condition in which, using Charles Taylor's formulation, "belief in God is unchallenged and indeed, unproblematic" and one wherein "belief is an option" and "one human possibility among others," it has nonetheless become something of a starting point in contemporary cultural critique to aver that scholarship understands religion to be a significant feature of historical and contemporary experience, culture, and knowledge.[9]

Although it may seem counterintuitive to say that the study of "secularism" or "the secular" is a form of religious studies, it is one way by which the New Puritan Studies might usefully differentiate itself from older studies of New England Puritanism. This older model, unlike today's, more or less

assumed the success of the Enlightenment secularization narrative. Such an assumption guided scholars into approaching Puritanism mostly as a historical artefact, even a religious relic of sorts: an object of study that might tell us something about a religious life defined in part by it being "over" and in the past, radically different from "modernity" and the post-belief sensibility that defines it as such. To assume a radical distinction between religious and secular experience is to assume the principal claim of the secularization narrative: that the latter replaced the former and lodged it permanently in the domain of the past and in the category of the irrational. Many studies of Puritanism, for example, sought to explain how Puritanism gave way to a Calvinist-shaped, secular American present – an America no longer religious, but still defined by its religious past.[10] The chapters in this book both reflect and practice post-secular critique in that they do not assume the success of progressive Whig-style historiography and its celebration of Enlightenment rationalism. Perhaps taking a page from William James, post-secular studies, unlike traditional religious studies, assumes a pragmatic view of the experiences, objects, and practices formerly regarded as being *either* religious *or* secular in their bearing. The new secular studies understands religion to be an abiding condition of secular life itself.

The field of early American Puritan studies presents an interesting case for considering the consequences of the new secular studies. Perry Miller famously told a story about Puritan "declension" that would, in its very failure, secure an origins story of American development tied to a specific New England mind. Early Americanists have been contesting Miller's declension thesis for decades, of course, but when we reconsider it in the light of twenty-first century secularism debates, American Puritanism becomes at once less self-evident and more complicated. If, under the old regime, the liberal democratic nations of the West (including the United States) arose from the ashes of religion's consumption by the secular, then what can be said about the modern nation when secular and religious orders are seen to construct each other? Elizabeth Dillon argues that a "narrative of liberal subjectivity" in United States political theory and practice "begins in privacy and moves forward into public agency."[11] Privacy's historical locus in this story is principally located in the religious experience of seventeenth-century Puritan New England and, importantly, in the experiences of Anne Hutchinson, whose "heresies" contribute to the rise of "liberal subjectivity and ... the creation of an oppositional public sphere within the Massachusetts Bay Colony" and beyond. Such religious experience in the seventeenth century emerges, at

the end of the eighteenth, as "the publicness of sentimental suffering" in popular domestic and sentimental fiction of the early Republican period. Anne Hutchinson's radically inward religious life becomes the circulated sentimental text of the later eighteenth-century's fallen woman: concepts of female gender, privacy, and religion were constitutive features of secular formations such as political liberalism and public sphere cultural politics.

A return to the Puritan archive has allowed early Americanist scholars to propose that colonial Puritan culture and its historiographical legacy enabled different, multiple, and competing versions of the nation's intellectual and political history to flourish. Sarah Rivett finds that the persistence of old-world Calvinism and the rise of the new science provided opportunity for seventeenth- and eighteenth-century ministers and theologians to adapt "methods from empiricism and natural philosophy to study evidence of God on human souls."[12] Science and religion work together to analyze the state of the soul and the world in which the soul's condition becomes an empirical "text" available to secular human inquiry. This coordination of scientific with religious modes of inquiry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is the result not exclusively of the rise of the new science, but of the recognizable contributions of the Calvinist reformation to "the rise of belief in progress through contested authority, a new stress on disciplined labor, a utilitarian spirit, and a belief in free inquiry."[13] The theological and ministerial ambitions of Puritanism cohered with the new science and together coordinated the pursuit of earthly spiritual transformation and scientific inquiry.

What has long been thought of as a pre-modern, pre-liberal, and even pre-political history of religious declension and erasure now appears as part of a longer and more complex narrative of Puritanism's continuing contribution to American political and literary history. No longer confined to secular modernity's past – what Russell Reising once referred to as an "unusable past" – a newly theorized Puritanism enables broader accounts of literary, cultural, and historiographical studies of the United States.[14] In a study of the "miraculous plagues" that decimated Native American civilization in the era of New England contact, Cristobal Silva argues that "epidemiological rhetoric is thus the narrative mechanism through which secular and sacred worlds are held together and bound as one in justification narratives, and where religion and civil law underpin one another." Gregory S. Jackson locates the emergence of nineteenth-century literary and visual realism in the strategies of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sermonic culture: "The historical development of popular Protestant narrative . . . shows how American Protestants struggled to integrate the

experience of America and American modernity into a narrative of spiritual salvation and communal destiny." Similarly, John Lardas Modern argues that a nineteenth-century "secular imaginary occurred at the level of emotion and mood, underneath the skin," and this "secularism names a conceptual environment, emergent since at least the Protestant Reformation and early Enlightenment, that has made 'religion' a recognizable and vital thing in the world." Tracy Fessenden, to some extent following nineteenth-century sociologist Max Weber's claim about the Protestant inner-life of western capitalism's work ethic, observes that "to consider the career of secularization in American culture is necessarily also to consider the consolidation of a Protestant ideology that has grown ever more entrenched and controlling even as its manifestations have become less visibly religious."[15] Such work makes visible and recognizable the "invisible domain" of religion – not as a kind of sacred interruption into an otherwise successfully secularized modern America, but rather as crucially visible components of American secularism itself. Whether heard as echo, viewed as trace, or lived as theology, post-secular Puritanism is no longer confined to the status of overdetermined historical relic.

The New Puritan Studies have also unsettled received notions of a "pre-secular" American Puritanism defined by a univocal, clerically dominant, and altogether coercive voice. The tension that emerged in the seventeenth century between ministerial supervision and lay self-authorization serves as a key site for a number of studies that consider closely the relationship between orality, literacy, and manuscript and print culture. Sandra Gustafson finds that Puritan culture's investment in oratorical ministerial and lay self-expression created a "performative dynamic in Puritanism." This dynamic placed orthodoxy's pronouncements in both competitive and imitative relation to a laity encouraged to receive and practice a holy and expressive orality. In a closely argued study of the tense relationship between clerical and lay interpretive authority in the seventeenth century, Lisa Gordis reaches back across the Atlantic to establish the foundational contribution of the English dissenting tradition to the development of New England's interpretive Bible culture as practiced by the "American" Puritans John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, and Thomas Shepard. A transatlantic archive produces a New English Puritan interpretive culture in which lay readers could be trained into "opening" the Bible on their own, "to feel empowered as readers" even, and yet remain open to ministerial instruction and guidance. Meredith Neumann has expanded the close focus on particular ministers and sermons to include book history, manuscript collation, and lay note-taking practices, making "the creation

of sermonic literature . . . a discursive process that involves the entire community in the twinned endeavors of scriptural explication and material dissemination of that exegesis."[16]

Extending beyond sermon analysis and church historiography, other scholars have examined the role of religion in broader cultural studies. Nan Goodman employs legal studies and anthropological accounts of hospitality to argue for a more heterogeneous seventeenth-century concept of culture operating against an orthodox desire for communal self-enclosure. Abram Van Engen argues for continuity between pre-modern Calvinist theology and the emergence of secular discourses of sympathy: "In seventeenth-century New England, this dual meaning of sympathy – the active command to fellow-feel (a duty), as well as the passive sign that could indicate salvation (a discover) – pervaded Puritan society and came to define the very boundaries of English culture, affecting conceptions of community, relations with Native Americans, and the development of American literature."[17]

For some time now, scholars of seventeenth-century Puritanism have found that there was less a single "New England Mind" than various and often distinct "Puritanisms." Janice Knight argued back in 1994 that there was never a singular religious, political, or cultural force or mindset in seventeenth-century New England settlement culture; rather, there was always a plurality of "New England Ways," differing accounts and formations of multiple Puritanisms that mingled with each other, claimed temporary perches of power only to find themselves, at other times, speaking from marginal positions of embattlement. Catherine Albanese develops a similarly polyvocal history of the colonial period, finding that the theology of the conservative reformation mingled with other religious belief systems, including Hellenistic cosmology, indigenous spirituality, African shamanism, and popular magic, to create an enduring "American metaphysic" whose richly complex interior and history confounds earlier accounts of a monological American Puritanism.[18] The "secular debates" have thus made it possible to reconceive the historical and legacy roles of colonial Puritanism in a broader American historiography, including the place of the "nation" in contemporary American literary and cultural studies.

The New Puritan Studies and the Nation

At the same time that the "secular debates" of the early twenty-first century have revitalized the study of religion in humanist scholarship, what might be called the "nation debates" in American studies have placed the category

of the nation into something like a probationary time-out. Numerous influential books and articles have identified the nation as the primary vehicle of an enduring political and social exceptionalism, as a legitimation of political domination and hegemony, and as an excuse for the continued repression of social, racial, sexual, and otherwise colonized "Americans."[19] A new vocabulary and paradigm shift to comparatist, transnational, transhemispheric, oceanic, and even "planetary" literary and cultural frameworks has promoted a scholarship that minimizes the methodological centrality of the territorially bounded nation in favor of a more fluid, relationally conceived, and ultimately less instrumental account of the nation. The "elastic nation," if one can put it that way, will enable more politically inclusive vistas of "America" to come into view and, in so doing, promote a genuinely transformative cultural politics in the twenty-first century.[20] Ironically, a kind of utopic yearning permeates both the politics of contemporary Americanist polemic and the ambitions of many New England bound and settled Puritans. Both contemporary "New American Studies" theoreticians and seventeenth-century Puritan theologians believe a better world might come into being through introspective self-correction and communal coherence.

It is more useful to consider how the New Puritan Studies might enable such revisionary projects in American studies more broadly. Michael Winship, for example, accounts for the emergence of the Massachusetts Bay Colony within the theological and church governance debates of late Elizabethan and Stuart England. Arguments about political tyranny, the role of clerical leaders in secular affairs, and the significance accorded to the congregational laity in dissenting churches all crossed the Atlantic in the early seventeenth century and took up residence in both Plymouth and Boston. Such familiar "American" narratives were not invented in New England; they were part of a long and established heritage of religious and political dissent in Old England. Those debates continued over the course of the seventeenth century, and the incorporation of separatist Plymouth into the polity of Massachusetts in no way settled these disputes. Far from it. The conflict between government restraint and liberty's expression formed the core of any "New England Way" and established the power relationship between these incipient political agencies in a permanent state of contest on both sides of the Atlantic.[21] This is a very different story from the one that celebrates "The Puritans" for escaping from political and religious tyranny and setting up a freedom-seeking Puritanism in New England (and then America). The roads taken – and, importantly, not taken – by seventeenth-century New England Puritans form an

importantly transatlantic archive of evolving rather than static beliefs about religion and politics. They also provide a significant backstory and cultural grammar for contemporary debate about the limitations of government power, individual authority, and an always insurgent populism.

Puritanism was also something of a foundational discourse of the transatlantic. In an important historical consideration that put the "English" back into the study of "American" Puritanism, Stephen Foster suggests that "as a habit of mind Puritanism required a special kind of cosmopolitanism transcending the intensely local and regional loyalities by which most Englishmen gained their identity."[22] Several recent studies explore archives physically and imaginatively located on both sides of the Atlantic. Carla Pestana argues that "more than any other cultural practice, religion had a far reaching impact on colonization" through its circulation of people, texts, and ideas whose statements of beliefs changed consistently and unexpectedly as their locations changed. Jonathan Beecher Field makes the case for the emergence of an "offshore public sphere" that mediated between New and Old England's assertions of dissent, orthodoxy, and administrative authority. The Atlantic Ocean functioned as the means by which representation circulated and as the condition that determined whether or not expressions of colonial dissent or assertions of imperial authority would be successful in either the short or the long term.[23]

The transatlantic turn in early modern studies has also enabled a corollary broadening of conceptual concerns only possible in the wake of a boundary-bending approach to the cultural histories of New England Puritanism as they relate to American national historiography. Michelle Burnham moves away from a religiously and geographically specific reading of New England Puritanism to one that situates the New England textual archive in the context of what she calls "a world system," in order to see "what colonial New England writing looks like once it is situated in a global context of a world economy rather than yoked to a nationalist trope of religious freedom." Kristina Bross finds that the figure of the converted Indian was crucially circulated in revolutionary and interregnum England: "In exchanges largely conducted in the pages of tracts printed in London to promote New England's evangelical activities, the Christian Indian was used to fix English identities on both sides of an Atlantic 'frontier.'"[24] But the point of this return is less to affirm an overarching narrative of national origin than it is to destabilize a comforting set of critical and political assumptions about the "Puritan origins" of American identity, including especially the prominent place assigned to

"dissent" as a central feature of a post-Puritan American self. With its skeptical regard of Puritanism's participation in nationalist historiography, the transatlantic perspective has promoted a robust comparative scholarship that considers English colonial Puritanism in dialogue, tension, and conflict with alternate linguistic, imperial, and religious conflicts.

These kinds of studies demonstrate that religion and its study can do more than serve the consolidation of the nation-state's narrative power; it can challenge those narratives as well. Religion is itself by definition a transnational set of human practices and beliefs whose confinement within or exclusive identification with any single national discourse is always problematical and incomplete. In the United States, at least in Americanist scholarship of the last quarter century, the equation of "Puritanism" with American nationalism has been as simply assumed as has the "rise" of evangelical Protestantism with right-wing politics, *especially in the United States*. Such a perspective is deeply provincial. It ignores the global upsurge and appeal of evangelical, Pentecostal, liberationist, or charismatic Protestantisms across the globe. Conservative Protestantism's rejection of worldly, localized, and visible institutional arrangements of religion actually lends itself to post- and transnational critiques of things like standing governments, anti-democratic (or at least anti-populist) consolidations of power, excessive consumption and worldliness, and the cultural tyrannies of secularism. Whatever else one might say about the political inclinations of contemporary fundamentalist, non-denominational, evangelical Protestant belief and practice, its combative resistance to secular governmentality at all levels makes it a poor agent of state-identified nationalism. A transatlantic and post-national seventeenth-century "American" Puritanism gives us far better purchase on the historical origins and cultural development of a contemporary global Protestantism. In this respect, the New Puritan Studies opens more rather than fewer perspectives on the multiple global locations of American literature.[25]

Puritan Studies and the Postcolonial

American Puritanism's reconceptualization within post-national and transatlantic perspectives has also promoted scholarly attention to its role in postcolonial historiography, particularly in reference to indigenous peoples and ethnography in the development of New England Puritanism. Bross's study coordinates the image of North American indigeneity with Old and New English attempts to further the kingdom of

God as a response to the English Civil War, a desire to achieve a Protestant focused millennium, and the need to thwart Spanish imperialism and the consequent spread of Catholicism among Native peoples.[26] Laura Stevens also connects Protestant missionary activity to the rise of the modern nation-state, arguing that early modern discourses of "piteous" regard for Native Americans "reconfigured the idea of intercontinental commerce" within the rhetoric of evangelical piety.[27] This may sound to some like a recapitulation of the nation's coalescence around Protestantism, but for Stevens and others interested in the critique of imperialist historiography, the point here is to de-naturalize any easy equation of the birth of the modern nation with a self-enclosing and exceptional New England Puritanism. By reconvening the study of Puritanism around a transatlantic archive, the New Puritan Studies enables a more thorough and more careful scholarly engagement with the colonizing force of the imperial nation.[28]

Most recent studies of New England Puritanism have been attentive to the place and provenance of Native American cultural practices, even where Native American historical culture is not the primary interest. Gustafson and Rivett, for example, consider the role of Native American spirituality and selfhood in the emergence of performative religious culture and empirical study of religious knowledge, respectively. Joanna Brooks reflects on the ways in which "the earliest African-American and Native American authors used religion and literature as instruments for transforming the meaning of race." Although primarily a study of eighteenth-century culture – in particular of African, African-American, and Native-American participation in mid-century evangelical revival culture – her work implicitly makes the case for considering Calvin-influenced Protestantism's productive contribution to community self-formation by colonized and enslaved peoples of North America.[29]

A notable attempt to read both with and against Puritan depictions of Native Americans in New England is Matt Cohen's *The Networked Wilderness*. Cohen invokes book history, theories of orality, and network and communications theory to develop his account of seventeenth-century information sharing and struggle between English settlement and indigenous cultures. His book revisits a somewhat familiar archive of the early settlement to "propose a theoretical reframing of the question of the production of textuality that addresses how literatures of encounter are analyzed and taught by amplifying the analysis of the material, sonic, and performative contexts of the production of social experience and knowledge in the seventeenth century."[30] Indigenous communicative and

spiritual practices interacted with Puritan understandings of the same in complex and contradictory ways. Non-textual communication – dress, gait, gesture, dance, and so forth – "spoke" to Puritan observers in ways that both reinforced and challenged their own self-understanding with respect to the nature of the Puritan God and the worldly force (or lack thereof) of spiritual "language." Kathleen Donegan coordinates many of the scholarly preoccupations discussed above into a new reading of the endurance of loss, suffering, and disaster not only in the early Plymouth community we know from William Bradford, but in relation to other terrains of settlement, national memory, and the making of early American narratives.[31]

Colonialism, and resistance to it, has thus brought the study of Puritanism into productive conversation with broadly revisionary and deliberately comparative cultural histories not merely of race and religion, but of language as well. Ralph Bauer pursues a comparative study of imperial colonial settlement "during the early modern period in the geo-political context of European settler colonialism in Spanish and British America from 1500–1800."[32] Although not explicitly a study of New England Puritanism, this work has contributed to an important shift in the literary critical agenda of early American studies that, first, promoted a multi-lingual and comparative approach to American colonial cultural practice and, second, made the case for thinking about "American" Puritanism from a postcolonial, anti-imperialist perspective. Competing dynastic imperial ambition (Spain vs. England) paralleled, promoted, and was in turn supported by notionally different religious (including missionary) agendas. The pre-eminence assigned to New England Protestantism by national history and by an "English-only" scholarship perceived to serve nationalist historiography becomes, thanks to Bauer's work and that of others, less tenable as a singular account of America's colonial past.[33]

These interventions have enabled a richer and more dynamic scholarship of colonial religious history and culture to emerge, including the publication of *Religious Transformations in the Early Modern Americas*, a collection of essays edited by Sarah Rivett and Stephanie Kirk. Bringing together a range of methods, the volume considers competing and overlapping traditions of Christianity in the settlement cultures of Spain, France, Portugal, and England. These essays cover the earliest periods of European–Indigenous contact and examine the continuing role of Protestantism in the early Republican period of the United States, arguing as a collection for the influence of European religious practices in

the production of a regnant modernity underpinned by secular concepts such as toleration, democracy, and liberalism. No longer residing in a repudiated religious past, or held responsible for creating and sustaining a self-provincializing exceptionalism, New England Puritanism has re-emerged as a fertile site of scholarly discovery, complexity, and possibility for American literary and cultural studies today.

American Literature and the New Puritan Studies: A Brief Overview

This book is not meant to be exhaustive, encyclopedic, or even broadly "representative" of what Puritan studies looks like in the twenty-first century. There are at least as many important voices in today's Puritan studies scholarship included in these pages as those who are not. That said, it offers a fair picture of the sorts of things practitioners in the field are talking about following the post-national turn in American cultural critique, the rise of secular studies, and the increasing attention to anti-colonialist critique. With this introduction, each chapter's endnotes, a short afterword, and the selected bibliography appearing at the end of the book, pathways for further reading and study will become clear.

Viewed methodologically, none of these is strictly disciplinary. If one of the salient developments in Puritan studies is its commitment to interdisciplinary analyses of American Puritanism and its afterlives, then grouping them into provisionally discrete disciplinary categories would defeat one of the signal purposes of this exercise as well. In the spirit of the New Puritan Studies, therefore the book groups the chapters into three perspectives that are themselves both broad and provisional. These include a commitment to understudied or too-long buried intellectual and historical archeologies; an engagement with social and political categories of critique, including the indigenous encounter; and, finally, an interest in the "post-Puritan" careers of some of the key concepts we associate with the Puritan seventeenth century.

In Part I of the book, we encounter "Unexpected Puritans," starting with Paul Downes' lively discussion of Thomas Hobbes, whose *Leviathan* marks a hitherto unremarked pivot between Puritan salvation theory and modern accounts of political sovereignty found in contemporary theories of human rights. In the company of Nan Goodman, we consider Increase Mather's understanding of the role Jews were to play in the millennium, a role made possible by the Ottoman empire's practice of cultural and religious tolerance in a time of profound religious anxiety around the

Mediterranean world. Also focused on Increase Mather, this time as the diplomat tasked with renegotiating the terms of the New England Charter, is a contribution from art historian Linda Johnson, who considers a commissioned portrait of Mather as a visual configuration of the contradictory forces of religious and political ambition then defining the colonial–imperial relation. In the last chapter in this part, we find that most unlikely of Puritans – the laughing one – becoming a more prominent figure in the church-attendance focused theology of Benjamin Colman, for whom "spiritual mirth" was consistent with even the most ascetic theology of the English reformation.

Part II, "Puritanism's Others," begins with a bold statement from Betty Booth Donohue, whose close analysis of Edward Johnson's *Wonder-Working Providence* reveals that this and other English works of the period "clearly reveal an American Indian shaping presence both thematically and stylistically" in American literature. Similarly interested in non-Anglophone and indigenous inscriptions of Puritan and more broadly Christian representational strategies, Allison Bigelow locates the spirit of Reformation Christianity within the linguistic meeting spaces of native, Spanish, and English grammars. Brice Peterson's subsequent analysis of Cotton Mather's *Angel of Bethesda* connects obstetrical to theological management and, in so doing, locates an analysis of female gender at the center of early Enlightenment scientific rationalism. In this part's final chapter, we again encounter Cotton Mather, this time in the company of condemned pirates, whose recognition and refusal of the Puritan minister's pastoral authority located a critique of naval discipline at the heart of a credible spiritual renewal.

Each of the four chapters in the final part, "Puritan Afterlives," considers some of the ways in which seventeenth-century New England Puritanism has manifested itself over the centuries. Jonathan Beecher Field traces the statuary career of prominent Puritans, including some of their fiercer dissenting opponents, within frameworks provided by municipal and national political developments and narratives. Employing newer digital archival analysis, Harry Brown also considers Puritan practices of monumental commemoration, in this case the iconography of grief appearing on the tombstones of children. Michael Ditmore returns us to the realm of Puritan historiography and polemic, arguing that concepts of "American Puritanism" developed in the twentieth century depended on a nineteenth-century historiographical and antiquarian imagination that privileged certain texts not themselves terribly influential to actual Puritans in seventeenth-century New England. In the collection's final chapter,

Abram van Engen considers the untold story of the "City on the Hill" motif. Often claimed as an aggressively nationalist and Protestant slogan of American political exceptionalism, the term has a longstanding association with Catholic understandings of the Church and its relation to the city-state. In a brief afterword, Bryce Traister closes the volume by reflecting on the resonance of the term "American Literature" in the wake of the New Puritan Studies. By insisting on colonial Puritanism's continued and pressing *visibility*, this recent scholarship enables broader conversations in American studies about the continuing and still vital role of religion and its history in our ongoing critique and understanding of the American nation and its many possible literatures.

Notes

1. For discussion of such gestures in early American literary studies, see Ralph Bauer, "Early American Literature and American Literary History at the 'Hemispheric Turn'," *American Literary History* 22 (2010): 250–262.
2. An early entry in this kind of "New American Studies" critique can be found in *National Identities and Post-Americanist Narratives*, ed. Donald Pease (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994).
3. Wai Chee Dimock, "Scales of Aggregation: Prenational, Subnational, Transnational," *American Literary History* 18 (2006), 219–228; John Muthalya, "Reworlding American Studies: the Globalization of American Studies," *Cultural Critique* 47 (2001), 91–119.
4. On the disappearance of religion in American literary studies, see Jenny Franchot, "Invisible Domain: Religion and American Literary Studies," *American Literature* 67 (1995), 833–842.
5. For this argument, see Donald E. Pease and Robyn Wiegman, "Futures," in *The Futures of American Studies*, ed. Pease and Wiegman (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 18.
6. For commentary on the reissue of Bercovitch's work and the "revival" of American Puritan Studies in recent years, see the essays collected in *The Turn Around Religion in America: Literature, Culture, and the Work of Sacvan Bercovitch*, ed. Nan Goodman and Michael Kramer (Burlington: Ashgate, 2014); the "Forum" section of *Early American Literature* 47 (2012), 377–441; and Sarah Rivett, "Early American Religion in a Postsecular Age," *PMLA* 128 (2013), 989–996. For a helpful discussion of secularism and early American studies, see Jordan Stein and Justine Murison, "Introduction: Religion and Method," *Early American Literature* 45 (2010): 1–29. Another indicator of the "return" of religion in early twenty-first century American literary studies may be seen in the publication of "After the Postsecular," a special issue of *American Literature* 86 (2014), 645–829.

7. See José Casanova, "The Secular, Secularizations, Secularisms," in *Rethinking Secularism*, ed. Craig Calhoun et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 55.
8. Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 25.
9. Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 3.
10. For a critique of this tendency, see Tracy Fessenden, *Culture and Redemption: Religion, the Secular, and American Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).
11. Elizabeth Dillon, *The Gender of Freedom: Fictions of Liberalism and the Literary Public Sphere* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 19, with additional quotations at 53, 208.
12. Sarah Rivett, *The Science of the Soul in Colonial New England* (Chapel Hill: Omohundro Institute for the University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 5.
13. Rivett, *Science of the Soul*, 24.
14. Russell Reising, *The Unusable Past: Theory and the Study of American Literature* (New York: Methuen, 1986), 49–91.
15. Silva, *Miraculous Plagues: an Epidemiology of Early New England Narrative* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 37; Jackson, *The Word and Its Witness: the Spiritualization of American Realism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 4–5; Modern, *Secularism in Antebellum America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 6; and Fessenden, *Culture and Redemption: Religion, the Secular, and American Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 3.
16. Gustafson, *Eloquence is Power: Oratory and Performance in Early America* (Chapel Hill: the Omohundro Institute for the University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 19 and 1–39; Gordis, *Opening Scripture: Bible Reading and Interpretive Authority in Puritan New England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); and Neuman, *Jeremiah's Scribes: Creating Sermon Literature in Puritan New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), x. For a still earlier study of "voice" and its emergence within Puritan culture, see Nancy Ruttenburg, *Democratic Personality: Popular Voice and the Trials of American Authorship* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).
17. Goodman, *Banished: Common Law and the Rhetoric of Social Exclusion in Early New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 59 and passim; and van Engen, *Sympathetic Puritans: Calvinist Fellow Feeling in Puritan New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 3.
18. Knight, *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts: Rereading American Puritanism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994); and Albanese, *A Republic of Mind and Spirit: A Cultural History of American Metaphysical Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), especially chapters 1–3. For another historical study, see Jon Butler, *New World Faiths: Religion in Colonial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

19. See, for example, Donald Pease, *The New American Exceptionalism* (Minneapolis: the University of Minnesota Press, 2009), and John Muthalya, *Reworlding America: Myth, History, and Narrative* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006).
20. For a provocative account of the fluid role of the nation in politically engaged American studies more broadly, see Robyn Wiegman, "The Ends of New Americanism," *New Literary History* 42 (2011): 385–407.
21. Michael Winship, *Godly Republicanism: Puritans, Pilgrims, and a City on a Hill* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 181.
22. Stephen Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture, 1580–1700* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 16.
23. Pestana, *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Shaping of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2009), 6; and Field, *Errands into the Metropolis: New England Dissidents in Revolutionary London* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2009), 15, 13.
24. Burnham, *Folded Selves: Colonial New England Writing in the World System* (Hanover, New Hampshire: New England University Press, 2007), 11; and Bross, *Dry Bones and Indian Sermons: Praying Indians in Colonial New England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 7.
25. For discussion of global evangelical Protestantism, see David Martin, "The Evangelical Upsure and Its Political Implications," in *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*, ed. Peter Berger (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 37–50.
26. Bross, *Dry Bones*, 12, 16.
27. Laura Stevens, *The Poor Indians: British Missionaries, Native Americans, and Colonial Sensibility* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 38.
28. For two important historical studies that establish this claim, see J.H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); and Carla Gardina Pestana, *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).
29. Joanna Brooks, *American Lazarus: Religion and the Rise of African-American and Native American Literatures* (London: Oxford University press, 2003), 14.
30. Matt Cohen, *The Networked Wilderness: Communicating in Early New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 12. For a still more recent consideration of "network theory" and indigeneity, see Wai Chee Dimock, "Early American Literature as a Networked Field: Mary Rowlandson, Louise Erdrich, and Sherman Alexie," *Early American Literature* 50 (2015): 103–124.
31. Kathleen Donegan, *Seasons of Misery: Catastrophe and Colonial Settlement in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

32. Ralph Bauer, *The Cultural Geographies of Colonial American Literatures: Empire, Travel, Modernity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3.
33. One might also look to Gordon Sayre's comparative study of French and English imperial colonialism, *"Les Sauvages Americains": Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

PART I

Unexpected Puritans

CHAPTER 2

Sovereignty and Grace: Hobbes and the Puritans

Paul Downes

"He to whom humanitarian action is addressed is not defined by his skills or potential, but above all, by his deficiencies and disempowerment."[1] Roni Brauman's critical observation about the way humanitarian ideology constructs the subject of its intervention suggests how far seventeenth-century Puritan thought has migrated beyond its theological and historical borders. He to whom God's saving grace is addressed, explained some of New England's earliest preachers, is not defined by his pious or moral accomplishments – his "works" – but by his spiritual deficiency. To the recurrent question, "What must I do to be saved?" Cotton Mather provided the orthodox answer: "Indeed, there is nothing to be done by us . . . Our Blessedness now come[th] not unto us, on the Terms of a Covenant of works . . . We are to be Saved, by Taking rather than by Doing."[2] Such passivity was a central tenet of a covenant of grace that undergirded the concepts of personal and national election in early New England, but it continues to inform an ideology of sovereignty that has come to play an enormous role in the theater of contemporary international and transnational politics. The authority to protect citizens of other nation states, an authority that defines an international sovereign power, appears to rely on the figure of an abandoned, hopeless and helpless individual, who has nothing to offer in return for his or her salvation. Sovereignty, that is to say, takes the form of an absolute gift that arrives not as the fulfillment of a contract or as the reward for some kind of reciprocal act of obedience or obeisance, but as the manifestation of a "responsibility to protect" that answers only to itself.[3] This liberal humanitarianism privileges the barely articulate cry of those who have been stripped of everything but their precarious humanity, because in those cries a sovereign humanity is heard calling to itself, thus completing a perfect circle of exchange thought to be the only guarantor of transnational sovereign power.

Both Puritan grace and humanitarian sovereignty require the presence of particular vulnerable persons (the sinner, the elect community, the victimized foreign national) in order to have any effect in and on the world. Puritanism and liberal humanitarianism are therefore equally invested in the construction of a sovereignty (whether God's or man's) that might intervene in the world without foregoing the allure of sacred or universal immunity. But the triumph of liberalism's secularized version of Puritan sovereignty theory also represents a historical victory over a very different articulation of political power, presented not as an apology for papal or royalist absolutism but as a defense and celebration of the possibility of community: Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651).

Hobbes's *Leviathan* is a painstaking account of how people might rescue themselves from a terrifying "state of nature" and build a commonwealth of peace and prosperity around a new understanding of the sovereign relationship.[4] In this respect, Hobbes set out, like his Puritan contemporaries, to imagine an effective political structure for a community seeking some kind of redemption from the violence that humankind is capable of inflicting upon itself. But Hobbes condemned the English Puritans who had precipitated civil war by claiming to have entered a sovereign allegiance with God himself: "Some men," he wrote, "have pretended for their disobedience to their Soveraign, a new Covenant, made, not with men, but with God" (122). This was, to Hobbes, both scripturally preposterous and politically "unjust." All sovereign power on this earth, he argued, at least since the time of Jesus Christ, is mortal power. Thus, any claim to have entered into a covenant with God, "is so evident a lye, even in the pretenders own consciences, that it is not onely an act of unjust, but also of vile, and unmanly disposition" (122). Scripture commanded us to pursue political community, said Hobbes, in order to preserve mankind for the coming of God's kingdom, but any claim to have realized or anticipated that coming Kingdom in the form of an elect class of believers was a species of political deception that threatened to revive the violence of a pre-political "state of nature." For Hobbes, social belonging and communal peace depended upon maintaining the radical inaccessibility of God's Kingdom, and thus he articulated a very different understanding of sovereignty and covenant than that entertained by English Puritans or put into practice by twentieth- and twenty-first-century liberal humanitarians.

One of the defining features of New England Puritanism was its explicit invocation of a theology of covenant that bound individuals and the colony itself to God according to the terms of a very particular understanding of grace. New England was to be at once a "visible church" and "God's

house," and thus sovereignty in America would belong both to God's time and mankind's. New Englanders proceeded, as Sacvan Bercovitch explains, "as though godliness could be truly detected, institutional forms could guarantee eternity, and the covenant of fraternity could be made one with the covenant of heaven" (45). While the Puritan reformation laid great stress on an egalitarian notion of universal depravity, the Puritan experiment in New England proceeded by announcing an absolute rupture between those whose salvation was guaranteed by a covenant with God and those individuals and peoples who fell outside the circle of this saving grace.

For the Puritan leadership in New England, the contradictory demands of a political theology equally invested in egalitarian depravity and spiritual election required careful articulation. This is how we ought to understand the enormous lengths that certain Puritan ministers went to in order to explain the concept of a covenant of grace. Grace functioned to conceal, by fantastically solving, the contradiction between Puritanism's investment in universal culpability and its lingering attachment to models of hierarchical distinction. Puritan grace also anticipates the myriad ways in which twentieth- and twenty-first-century liberalism strives to reconcile an ostensible commitment to transnational democratic equality with a lingering attachment to idealized forms of sovereign power that, as Hobbes predicted, only exacerbated exclusionary and ultimately self-destructive models of political belonging.

The concept of a covenant of grace was taken up by protestant reformers as part of an effort to challenge ecclesiastical and political power that appropriated and diluted God's sovereign exceptionality. The repudiated doctrine of a covenant of works suggested that fallen men and women could earn salvation through their acts; it also served to enhance the power of a church (or a church-state) hierarchy that found ways to correlate the "work" of earning salvation with the structures of obedience and approval that consolidated their own wealth and power. In response, the concept of a covenant of grace sought to disabuse Christians everywhere of the illusion that the right kind of good behavior could earn (or even force) God's reciprocal good will.[5] The Puritan covenant of grace thus undermined older structures of social, religious and political privilege, notably those that English reformers associated with the Church in Rome and the reign of Charles I. For the New England Puritans in particular, this same covenant also defined their peculiar *national* relationship with God. From the early days of the emigration, grace was invoked as the name for both the personal and

the social form in which divine sovereignty could intervene in the mundane world.

The most widely respected interpreter and defender of the covenant of grace in seventeenth-century New England was John Cotton. A year after the publication of Hobbes's *Leviathan*, and almost twenty years after he left England for America, Cotton composed "A Treatise on the Covenant of Grace," in which he attempted to distinguish this theological principle from the covenant of works that described God's relationship with man before the fall.[6] Cotton begins by detailing the terms of God's promise to Abraham and his descendants in *Genesis*. Abraham, as scripture relates, might have been a peculiarly upright man; nevertheless, Cotton explains, even Abraham could not simply enter into a contractual relation, as if of equals, with God. As absolute sovereign, "God himself doth undertake in this Covenant to be the Author and Finisher both of his Faith, and Obedience, Hebrews 12:2."[7] Seeking to protect God's sovereignty from any human interference, even that occasioned by the sinner's participation in his own salvation, Cotton describes a God who "authorizes" the very obedience his subjects practice. Grace allows God to communicate with humankind without having to break his sovereign silence and gives a spiritual name to the divine possibility of being party to an agreement (or "covenant") while remaining radically incapable of losing anything in the exchange. The sovereign, God, is somehow able to be at once addressor and addressee, giver and receiver, the force of redemption and the source of the faith required of the redeemed: "In a Covenant of Works," Cotton wrote, "God giveth himself conditionally; in that of Grace, *absolutely*" (28–29). The mystery "doth argue," adds Cotton, "the marvellous freedom of the Covenant of Grace: for the Lord offereth it out of his Grace, without the foresight of Faith, or Works; for he undertaketh to give both Will and Deed of his good pleasure" (12).

Hobbes rejected the notion of a Puritan covenant with God not because he wanted to defend the Roman church's covenant of works, but because he rejected the idea that any mere mortal could communicate with the sovereign of sovereigns. Instead, Hobbes laid great stress on an alternative, "messianic" understanding of the temporal and conceptual distance separating humankind from God's kingdom. Divine sovereignty, by which Hobbes meant a perfect coincidence of might and right, would not arrive before the coming of "God's Kingdom" – an event that no mere person could foretell and that would mark a radical rupture with human history and understanding (*Leviathan*, chapter 35). Hobbes's political philosophy does not atheistically deny God's sovereignty (as many of his critics

claimed). Nor does it propose that God's sovereignty belongs to a conceptual space that only a select few have access to. Hobbes insists that divine sovereignty (which is also to say, divine temporality) has a radically *deferred* relationship to mortal sovereignty. Moreover, Hobbes suggested that this deferred relationship to God's kingdom was crucial for any political philosophy committed to combatting pernicious forms of social hierarchy. A peaceful community is possible, Hobbes suggests, only insofar as it is possible to think and act in accordance with a dislocated sovereign temporality.

The perpetually deferred time of divine sovereignty (the time of the end of time) does not, in Hobbes's application, encourage us to give up on this world and lose ourselves in contemplation of a fantastic other domain. Nor does the significance of God's kingdom lie in what we need to do in order to align our political order with God's divine rule. Rather, the deferral of God's Kingdom (its status as "to come") marks any historical sovereignty as fundamentally contingent. Where Hobbes's reference to "God's kingdom to come" stitches an opening onto the future into political life, Puritan grace fantasizes an escape from history and politics that Hobbes feared would actually take us "back" to what he famously called a "state of nature." A fantasized end of time, taking place in time, Hobbes warned, corresponds to an end of all that makes meaning and relation possible in the world we share: "No arts, no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death: and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short" (89).

Hobbes and the Puritans drew on their distinct interpretations of the time and place of God's kingdom to develop very different models of the causal relationship between sovereign power and those subject to its commands. Giving both "Will and Deed," God is also, as Cotton puts it, the "Author and Finisher" of our salvation. Cotton's redeemed sinner risks taking on the profile of a ventriloquized or possessed puppet, because absolute divine sovereignty implies a profound mortal incompetence. Hence, Cotton introduces the idea of Christ as a special mediator between mankind and God: God "maketh a Covenant with Christ," writes Cotton, "and taketh us into that Covenant" (12), one that could protect the sovereign decision from contamination by human comprehension without wholly evacuating our sense of the sinner's particular responsibility. But as soon as this mediator is introduced, a familiar *mis-en-abyme* threatens to open up, as the mediator also needs to be translated before mere mortals can receive the message: "The second work of the Spirit, in respect whereof he is called a seal," writes Cotton, "is his engraving the likeness of Jesus

Christ upon the soul; for the Lord hath predestinated us to be conformed unto the image of his Son, Romans 8:29" (138).

Grace starts to develop a fraught relationship with structures of representation, because God's sovereignty seems able to exercise its power and preserve its inviolability only by deploying a series of sacred intermediaries: the Son, the Spirit, and the "likeness" of Jesus Christ engraved by the Holy Ghost on the soul of the redeemed. Grace is the message we must be able to receive without God, the sender, having to subordinate himself to a shared language that both he and we could comprehend. The sacred interference with our ordinary understanding of communication and representation is repeatedly identified, by Cotton, with the charismatic figure of the "Holy Ghost." This spectral messenger plays a powerfully ambiguous role in the theory of the covenant of grace, because it is apparently able to mediate between man and God without having to detour through corruptible matter. "All the works of creation," writes Cotton, "though they may convince my judgment that there is a God, yet they cannot beget lively faith in me, unless the Holy Ghost set in with them" (137). As the "seal" of our salvation, the Holy Ghost effects in us the very faith we need to honor God's sovereign intervention. But it is a "seal" rather than, for example, a "sign," because the Holy Spirit is not the bearer of a message that has to be *read*. "[T]hough faith comes by hearing," Cotton says, "yet it is the spirit in the word that maketh the New Testament a lively letter." The spirit, in other words, turns hearing into understanding, even if the text in question is holy scripture: "for the word of God cannot do it, no nor the Sacraments," Cotton insists, unless they be "seals"; and "when are they seals?" he asks: "only then when the Holy Ghost is conveyed in them; and therefore we see why the Holy Ghost is called a seal, because he doth confirm our faith in the works, and word of God" (137). For Cotton, grace is the immaterial medium of divine sovereignty, and "the Spirit of God . . . writeth (as it were) Jesus Christ in our hearts as with the finger of the living God" (138). But what the spirit "writeth (as it were)" is a *seal* that seals the sovereign off from his subjects at the very moment in which his power is exercised. The sinner cannot read God's message on his or her own, and he or she cannot write directly to God. God responds to his own cry for help. For Puritanism, the figure of the Holy Spirit, and of the "Seal" of faith, performs (even as it strives to allay) a formidable anxiety about the relationship between sovereignty and representation.

When it comes to contemporary discussions of transnational humanitarian intervention, a similar structure of fantastic mediation comes into play to describe the relationship between sovereign power and the

recipients of its protective salvation. The broadly influential doctrine of "The Responsibility to Protect," for example, increasingly invoked by advocates of humanitarian intervention in the US State Department, at the UN and around the world, calls on the Security Council to "discharge its responsibility" – which is to say, exercise its sovereign authority – "in conscience-shocking situations crying out for action" (*The Responsibility to Protect*, 55). International humanitarianism, in other words, might respond in various ways to the language of political organization and deliberation, but it derives its sovereign legitimation from liminal forms of expression that are presented as capable of channeling human suffering to human "conscience" without having to detour through the particularities of cultural or historical circumstance. For the liberal humanitarian, the authority to cross borders and bypass elected government is granted sovereign immunity by the immediate communication that is imagined to take place between human suffering and human sympathy. The figure of the Holy Ghost, mediating between human language and divine authority, thus recurs in myriad deployments of marginal humanity or depleted agency (in the form of women and children in need of protection, in the sounds of silence and anguish and in the lineaments of innocence and vulnerability). These figures of absolute need "cry out" for a transnational "responsibility to protect" that ought to be recognized as the quintessentially liberal reinscription of Puritan grace.

In the case of divine intervention, as I have suggested, the Holy Ghost or the Son of God – the sacred bearers of grace – work to protect the absolute inviolability of God's sovereignty: God's omnipotence requires that he not negotiate directly with, or even speak the same language as, the sinner. In the discourse of liberal humanitarianism, the concept of a "responsibility to protect" works to erase the gap between the individual (or individuals) who needs and the sovereign force that could provide salvation, thereby protecting international sovereign actors (the members of the security council, for example) from any association with illegitimate force. Hence, since 2001, the phrase "right or duty to intervene" has been superseded, in official United Nations parlance, by the phrase "responsibility to protect," because the former phrase, as the authors of the authoritative account of this new concept explain, "is intrinsically more confrontational," while "the 'responsibility to protect' is more of a linking concept that bridges the divide between intervention and sovereignty" (*The Responsibility to Protect* 17). It is precisely as such a "linking concept" that the "responsibility to protect" translates Puritan grace for a secular liberal orthodoxy. The "responsibility to protect" and the

vulnerable human being that cries out for such protection together make up the seal – the Holy Ghost – of an ostensibly transnational sovereign power. Puritanism and liberal humanitarianism, in other words, share an investment in sovereignty as the effect of a fabulous disavowal of mediation or of what Thomas Hobbes suggested was essential to the very notion of a commonwealth – namely, "representation."

In chapter 16 of *Leviathan*, Hobbes describes the relationship between a people and their sovereignty by bringing the issue of representation to center stage. "A Multitude of men, are made *One* Person," writes Hobbes, "when they are by one man, or one Person, Represented; so that it be done with the consent of every one of that Multitude in particular." This process of representative consent, Hobbes explains, is an authoring process: "because the Multitude naturally is not *One*, but *Many*, they cannot be understood for one; but many Authors, of every thing their Representative saith, or doth in their name; Every man giving their common Representer, Authority from himself in particular; and owning all the actions the Representer doth, in case they give him Authority without stint" (114). The Puritan sovereign, as we have seen, "authors" his subjects' obedience (their faith in him) via grace, but the Hobbesian sovereign is "authored" into being by the subjects it represents and for whom it will voice the law of the commonwealth. The fabulous capacity of the Puritan God to give to the redeemed sinner the very faith that he or she needs in order to be worthy of that salvation becomes, for Hobbes, the marvelous process whereby people "covenant" with themselves to invent their own representational political voice. If the Puritan sinner can only become "saved" insofar as he or she has been "sealed" into eternal life by the sovereign, the Hobbesian sovereign can only act "as if" animated by the collective signature of a community. It is the sovereignty, says Hobbes, not the sovereign's helpless subjects, that requires the "seal" of authority in order to come to life; it is the covenanting of the multitude, one with another, says Hobbes, that generates the "Art" that creates "that great LEVIATHAN called a COMMON-WEALTH, or STATE" (9).

In *Leviathan*, the Puritan sinner's passivity before God is displaced by a crucial structure of political acquiescence. When people come together to generate a shared sovereign power, Hobbes explains, they agree to accept the representative "will" of the sovereign (whether it be expressed by an individual or an "Assembly of men") as their own, even where that will differs from their individual opinion. "[E]very one," Hobbes writes, "as well he that Voted for it, as he that Voted against it, shall Authorize all the Actions and Judgments, of that Man, or Assembly of men, in the same

manner, as if they were his own, to the end, to live peaceably amongst themselves, and be protected against other men" (121). The figure of the citizen who participates in authoring the sovereign representative government *even* in the moment of expressing difference or opposition is in some respects the defining figure of Hobbes's commonwealth. From a pejorative liberal perspective, this figure encapsulates the generalized submission to absolute authority frequently associated with Hobbesian political philosophy. But this figure ought to be recognized as another example of how Hobbes refuses to identify sovereignty with an escape from, or transcendence of, historical social existence. Individuals who vote against what nevertheless becomes the law of the state come to accept the social will "as their own" because this act of apparent self-renunciation gives communal life a chance. Puritan grace appears at and marks the limit of a sinner's capacity for self-redemption, but it does so to announce the absolutely hierarchical bond between an individual and transcendent sovereign power (God's power). In Hobbes's political philosophy, the possibility of dislocation between agency and responsibility that defines citizenship marks the impossibility of maintaining an absolute divide between individual and social being. There is community, for Hobbes, because it is possible to be responsible for that which exceeds or escapes the borders of our individual will or desire. Where the Puritan suspension of agency serves, in other words, to shore up hierarchical sovereign power (God's or that of the elect) by crying out for salvation, the equivalent Hobbesian moment distributes agency across the poles of a decidedly literary model of sovereign invention:

> The only way to erect such a Common Power . . . and thereby to secure them in such sort, as that by their owne industrie, and by the fruites of the Earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly; is to . . . appoint one Man, or Assembly of men, to beare their Person; and every one to owne, and acknowledge himself to be Author of whatsoever he that so beareth their Person, shall Act, or cause to be Acted, in those things which concerne the Common Peace and Safetie. (*Leviathan* 120)

Consider, in this regard, the relationship between Hobbes's theory of civic consent and that of John Winthrop, perhaps the most influential political figure in seventeenth-century Massachusetts. Discussing the powers of the magistrate under the colony's new *Body of Liberties* in 1641, for example, Winthrop wrote:

> where [the people] putt themselves into our power to binde them to Lawes and penalties, they can intende no other but suche as are just and righteous: and althoughe their implicit Consent may binde them to outward

> obedience, yet it neither tyes them to satisfaction, nor frees such Lawmakers from unrighteousnesse, nor the Law it self from injustice; nor will such a Lawe be a sufficient warrant to the Conscience of the Judge, to pronounce such a sentence, as he knows to be apparently disproportionable to the offence brought before him.[8]

At first glance, it might seem that Winthrop's reference to "implicit Consent," and the "obedience" this implies, places his political model squarely within a Hobbesian universe.

But Winthrop has a very different agenda. Where Hobbes emphasizes the difficult idea that an individual might have to accept responsibility for (and demonstrate obedience to) a law that he or she did not approve in order to maintain and belong to a commonwealth, Winthrop is more concerned about what he calls the "righteousness" of such laws or the "conscience" of the officers of the law. The people who consent, writes Winthrop, and the magistrates who execute are both governed, in the last analysis, by a sovereignty that commands them all – a sovereign justice (or "righteousness") that the people always *intend* and that the Judges always remain subservient to. The specter of arbitrary or absolutist sovereign power is exorcised, here, by recourse to the language of intention, justice, righteousness and conscience. Winthrop's aim is not, primarily, to found a peaceful and egalitarian community, but to establish a state in which political authority might correspond with transcendent (sovereign) ideals.[9]

This political inclination also explains Winthrop's opening gesture, whereby the people and the "we" who render judgment upon them are grammatically and fundamentally separated. Just as in his famous remarks on the ship *Arbella* ten years previously, Winthrop remains beholden to a vision of stratified social order in which an exclusive hold on power is dissembled by recourse to a conception of transcendent, sovereign justice. Hobbes's critique of Puritan covenant theory suggests, by way of contrast, that any claim to have identified the presence of God's sovereign power at work in our world is, in fact, a concealed assertion of political authority made on behalf of a particular class or interest. It is precisely the alignment of an idealizing language of sovereign justice with an implicit resistance to social equality that Hobbes's theory of sovereignty works to expose and challenge. In fact, Hobbes's refusal to appeal to a sovereign "righteousness" that would command the intentions of "the people" and the consciences of those in power coincides with a conception of sovereignty that the Puritan (and, subsequently, the liberal) tradition has repeatedly dismissed as "arbitrary" and "absolutist."

In Hobbes's account of how sovereignty works to save people from themselves, a crucial "as if" plays a role analogous to that of grace in the Puritan model of God's sovereign order. "For by Art is created that great LEVIATHAN called a Common-wealth," writes Hobbes, that speaks "as if" it were the will of each of its members (9, 120). The sovereign "soul" of this fictional person is thus (scandalously) an "Artificiall Soule" (9). Language's power to bring an event to pass or, in a more disruptive sense, to construct the subject of its own enunciation appears in Hobbes's political philosophy as the "soul" of the commonwealth. In Hobbes's *Leviathan*, language, specified as art or representation, plays a crucial and unhampered role in the structure of sovereignty. A community comes into being, Hobbes suggests, not in the moment of redemption when a sovereign wisdom or power stamps its justice directly onto the souls of its subjects, but when the members of a would-be community represent themselves "as if" they were one. The mystery of the "seal" of grace that would carry God's will without forcing a detour through representation becomes, in Hobbes's political schema, the enigma of our individual and communal dependence on a structure of representational or invented sovereignty. Sovereignty is the "artificial soul" of the commonwealth that functions to save people from the self-destructive nightmare of the state of nature.

The beneficial effects of Hobbesian sovereignty – a sovereignty generated by the social act – can all too easily be experienced as a kind of violence that proceeds from a community that cannot, by definition, contract with any of the individuals who make it up. This is why Hobbes so frequently referred to a people's sovereignty as the "common power to keep them in awe" (chapter 17). But unlike the awful power of the Puritan God, the power of *Leviathan*'s sovereign is indissociable from its commonality and from its artificial or fictional generation. Puritan grace empties its subjects of agency in order to maintain the fullness of God's sovereign being. But in the Hobbesian commonwealth, it is the sovereignty (the social power) that is emptied of idealized being in order to give its subjects a chance for a future outside of the war of all against all. Any possibility of community, for Hobbes, requires a detour through the necessary fiction of an invented social sovereign that can be as alienating or as graceful as a poem.

God the sovereign is present, for Hobbes, only in a perpetual state of absence (God's "kingdom to come"), while the man-made sovereign of the commonwealth is nothing without the multitude to whom it gives a face and a possibility of community. Next to the enigma of Hobbesian (which is to say, historical and political) sovereignty, Puritan grace can begin to sound intoxicatingly simple. But traces of this enigmatic Hobbesian

sovereignty can also be discerned in certain distinctive Puritan preoccupations with the idea and the language of God's conceptual strangeness. "What God is," wrote William Ames, in one of Puritanism's most cited works of theology, "none can perfectly define, but that hath the Logicke of God himself."[10] The rhetorical force that animates so many Puritan texts and which makes them a joy to read, even now, proceeds from an apparent love for, or a terrified fascination with, a model of sovereign illogic that might yet be reclaimed for an alternative (which is to say, posthumanist or post-liberal) democratic politics. The "awful" God of this Puritan imaginary not only cannot be contracted with, but cannot even be named except *as* figurative excess or hyperbole or via the *mis-en-abyme* of representation. Grace, the Holy Ghost and Christ the Son, as we have seen, serve to protect God the sovereign from direct engagement with us. To say that a sinner, or a community of sinners, requires the absolute intervention of Christ, or grace, in other words, might be Puritanism's way of recognizing that any human community needs to be supplemented by a representation of itself that does not simply coincide with the pre-existing will or desire of its members. Puritan rhetorical extravagance might be read to acknowledge the world-making power of a writing that comes back to us from the people we will become, and thus from a future that is bound by no contract with the present.

Take, for example, the poetry of Edward Taylor. Much of Taylor's verse is inspired by a desire to give a name or an image to an experience of divine sovereignty that perpetually, and delightfully, withdraws from signification: "A Golden Path my Pensill cannot line,/ From that bright Throne unto my Threshold ly."[11] Taylor loves this sovereignty, even if (or, perhaps, *because*) he can never, finally, find the exact language with which to name or describe it. Taylor's poetry tempts us to conclude that what God sends for our salvation is not just a son who can be figured in multiple ways: as "Heaven's Sugar Cake"; as a superlative lawyer who will "anvil Arguments greate store Out of his Flesh and Blood"; or as a master burglar: "A Lock of Steel upon my Soule, whose key / The serpent keeps, I feare, doth lock my door:/ O pick 't: and through the key-hole make thy way." Rather, it is figuration itself, or that which can only be grasped as figure, that holds out some promise for the future.[12] As Norman Grabo explains, in a wonderful discussion of Taylor's imagery, Christ appears in the minister's writing as

> a spring or a well, a pool or a cleansing shower, a laver, or fountain of *aqua vitae*, whose blood scours the soul of all sin . . . [T]he sun whose hot rays melt the frozen lake of Taylor's affections, disperse the clouds of sin, or

> enlighten the eye blinded by it . . . a spark falling into Taylor's tinderbox of sin . . . a flame dropped into the poet's hearth . . . or again, a furnace in which Taylor's heart is melted like ore.[13]

Taylor turns to poetry because he seems fascinated by the correspondence between the Christian figure of redemption from the sad state of nature and the intimation that figuration itself has a privileged role to play in this repeated and repeatable transaction. The pleasure of Taylor's poetry, and the force of whatever originality it enjoys, is inseparable from its cat-and-mouse game with God's sovereign withdrawal from language. To be able to finally name God, to find the right figure or metaphor for his divine power, Taylor's oeuvre suggests, would be equivalent to drawing God into the contractual circle of our language and thus our community. The end of poetry would coincide, so to speak, with the coming of God's kingdom. But to leave God alone, to respect his desire to retreat from view and exercise his sovereign power from a position of absolute anonymity, would be, for Taylor, to surrender poetry.

Poetry thus coincides with a political refusal to collaborate with any sovereignty that would secret itself from language and community behind the veil of an officially determined concept of "grace" (or, in more contemporary terms, behind a geopolitically specific and inviolable notion of "humanitarianism"). In Taylor's poetry, as in everything we have come to celebrate under the heading of the literary, invention marks a sovereign refusal to honor the terms of any previously settled contract of signification. A wild sovereign figurality is the "artificiall soule" of poetry and of a Hobbesian commonwealth. Taylor's God, in all his metaphorical strangeness, perpetually hints at the "mortal god" of *Leviathan* that, as Hobbes insists, cannot be thought apart from the work of imitation and representation and which is neither "human" nor "divine." The fabulous "monstrosity" of the Hobbesian sovereign, with its extraordinary "artificial soul," lurks in Taylor's dexterous figurations of Christian salvation. If, as countless commentators have acknowledged, Taylor's poetry always risks being at odds with his faith, it is because his poetry intimates a sovereignty that his conventional Puritanism strains to repudiate. If we can't always tell whether Taylor loves the figure of Christ more than figuration itself, it is because Taylor the poet is a Hobbesian despite himself, and the salvation he celebrates is as fabulously earthly and impure as anything the arch-atheist might have conjured: "Oh! Matchless love, laid out on such as he! / Should gold wed dung, should stars woo lobster claws, / It should no wonder, like this wonder, cause."[14]

Notes

1. Roni Brauman, "Contradictions of Humanitarianism," translated from the French by Bridget Conley and Emily Apter, in *Alphabet City: Culture, Theory, Politics*, ed. Len Guenther and Cornelius Heesters (Toronto: Anansi Press, 2000), 47–48.
2. Cotton Mather, *The Greatest Concern in the World. A Short and Plain Essay to Answer that Most Concerning and All Concerning Inquiry, What Must I do to be Saved?* Printed for and sold by Roger Sherman and Benjamin Mecom, New Haven, Conn. 1765. Early American Imprints, Series 1, no. 10067. University of Toronto Libraries. September 8, 2015.
3. See *The Responsibility to Protect*, produced by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty [ICISS] (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001), XI.
4. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Subsequent citations are given parenthetically in the text.
5. God's will, wrote the influential English Puritan, William Perkins, "it selfe is an absolute rule both of justice and reason." Quoted in Perry Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," in *Errand into the Wilderness* (New York: Harper, 1964): 50–98, quotation at 52.
6. Cotton, a key player in the controversy over free grace that led to Anne Hutchinson's expulsion in 1638, managed to maintain his place of influence in the community. See "Cotton's Rejoinder" in *The Antinomian Controversy, 1636–1638: A Documentary History*, ed. David D. Hall (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990). See, too, Michael P. Winship's account of this affair in *The Times and Trials of Anne Hutchinson: Puritans Divided* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005).
7. John Cotton, *A Treatise on the Covenant of Grace* (1652). (1652; reprint, Shropshire, England: Quinta Press, 2006): http://quintapress.macmate.me/PDF_Books/John_Cotton/Treatise_of_the_Covenant_of_Grace.pdf
8. "John Winthrop on Arbitrary Government" in *Puritan Political Ideas, 1558–1794*, ed. Edmund S. Morgan (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003: 149–160), 155.
9. The ICISS authors echo Winthrop's approach at key moments: "We have no difficulty in principle with focused military action being taken against international terrorists ... But military power should always be exercised in a principled way" (*The Responsibility to Protect*, ix).
10. Ames, quoted in Perry Miller's, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," in *Errand into the Wilderness* (New York: Harper, 1964): 50–98, 52.
11. Taylor, "8. Meditation. Joh. 6.51. I am the Living Bread," in *The Poems of Edward Taylor*, ed. Donald A. Stanford (reprint; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 18.
12. Taylor, "39. Meditation. 1 Joh. 2.1. If any man sin, we have an Advocate," in *The Poems of Edward Taylor*, ed. Donald A. Stanford (reprint; Chapel Hill:

University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 63; Taylor, "49. Meditation. Matt. 25.21. The joy of thy Lord," in *The Poems of Edward Taylor*, 79.

13. Norman S. Grabo, *Edward Taylor* (New Haven: College and University Press, 1961), 57.
14. Edward Taylor, "33. Meditation. Joh. 15.13. Greater Love hath no man than this, that a man lay Down his Life for his Friend," *The Poems of Edward Taylor*, 149.

CHAPTER 3

Sabbatai Sevi and the Ottoman Jews in Increase Mather's The Mystery of Israel's Salvation

Nan Goodman

In December of 1665, in the city of Smyrna in the Ottoman Empire, Sabbatai Sevi, a pious and eccentric Jew in his late thirties, openly declared himself the Jewish messiah. Letters confirming his status poured in from Syria and Egypt, where large numbers of Jews had already accepted Sevi's divinity, and from Palestine, where Nathan of Gaza, a well-regarded rabbi, had already anointed him. By early 1666, there was general rejoicing in synagogues across the Ottoman Empire and Europe. Torah scrolls were taken out of their arks; men and women danced and sang; miracles were witnessed. At the same time, thousands of Jews from Poland, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands left their homes and businesses to join Sevi in what became the greatest messianic frenzy in Jewish history.

Accepting Sevi's proclamation as a sign of the imminence of their own millennium, many Christians joined the celebrations as well, believing that a Jewish messiah was a prelude to the true messiah, who would convert all Jews at his Second Coming. Fewer than nine months after Sevi, in the words of Gershom Scholem, "shook the House of Israel to its very foundations"; however, he converted to Islam, and the millennial fervor came to an end.[1] Most of Sevi's Jewish and Christian followers dismissed him as an apostate or, worse, an impostor. Dispirited Jews returned to their homes, and the millennialist expectations of many Christians in Europe and England were dampened.

In Puritan New England, however, millennialism continued to thrive, and Sevi continued to play an important part. In fact, Increase Mather developed a sermon series responding to Sevi's presence and impact in the Middle East. He published the sermons together as *The Mystery of Israel's Salvation, Explained and Applied: or, A Discourse Concerning the General Conversion of the Israelitish Nation* (1669). Using Sevi as an occasion to speculate on the imminent conversion of the Jews, as many ministers did before him, Mather's sermons conformed in many ways to the Christian

concern with the Ottoman Empire as a site of the apocalypse as well as the only non-Christian geopolitical power of any significance. Efforts to translate the Bible into Turkish in the middle of the seventeenth century attest to this interest as well.[2] Mather's interest in Sevi in *The Mystery of Israel's Salvation*, however, goes beyond these more general concerns to attend to the political and legal situation of the Jews and to meditate on the kind of political and cultural agency they had achieved as a result of the Ottoman Empire's policy of religious and cultural toleration.[3] Because of these Ottoman policies, among other things, the early modern world was changing, and the early modern Puritans were changing with it.

For Mather, the history of the Ottoman Jews offered a paradigm for minority political action and identity. Such political agency had two implications for Mather. The first translated into an approach to the millennium that complicates what some scholars have thought of Mather's anti-Semitism.[4] Still assuming that the Jews would eventually recognize their error and convert to Christianity, Mather attributes to the Ottoman Jews a political power and agency that would figure greatly in their ultimate salvation. The second translated into an approach to events around the world that signals the Puritans' comparative approach to questions of religion. If the Jews could accomplish some of their own political goals, including political cohesion and leadership under foreign rule, then the Puritans, who were locked into a subordinate colonial position with respect to England and had of late been suffering restrictions on their liberties at the hands of the king, might likewise hope for political ascendance. What lessons about the millennium and about forging ties with peoples geographically and culturally distant could be learned from the Jews under Ottoman rule? What new models were available for connecting with social and legal orders around the world?

Mather's approach to the Jews and to the Ottoman Empire differs significantly from other mid-century approaches taken by the Puritans in England and New England. Based on readings of Romans 11:26, which prophesied that prior to endtime "[a]ll Israel shall be saved," most earlier Puritan sermons were devoted to the subject of the Jews' conversion, which was understood as a prerequisite to the millennium. Inspired by recent (albeit highly controversial) theories that the American Indians were descended from the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel and by reports that indigenous peoples had recently been found in the Andes reciting the Jewish prayer "Shema,"[5] millennialists believed that prophecies about the Jews, who were scattered diasporically across the globe, were being fulfilled. Prompted by these findings, as well as by a belief that having Jews in

England would reinforce the Puritans' sense of their own national election, many English millennialists also found themselves arguing for the readmission of the Jews to England. No less a millennialist than Oliver Cromwell was involved in these debates.[6]

Like many millennialists who read the Hebrew Bible as a messianic Christian text, Mather appears to take comfort in the fact that the Jews were scattered "up and down the world," including in the person of the natives in America, but in *The Mystery of Israel's Salvation* he seems more impressed by the demographic concentration of Jews in the Ottoman East. In the Ottoman Empire, Mather's *Mystery* implies, the Jews had found a space to develop a culturally rich and politically distinctive identity. It is this image of the Jews, as opposed to one about their exiled biblical ancestors, that drives Mather's vision in *The Mystery*. Gone from *The Mystery* is the focus on readmitting the Jews into the sovereign sphere of England. In its stead is a focus on the Jews as a singular people who have resisted assimilation and achieved a presence sufficiently large to exercise political agency unseen since biblical times.

Studying the Ottoman emphasis in Mather's *The Mystery* has implications for Puritan studies as a whole. By considering Mather's concern about the Ottoman Empire, we are afforded an opportunity to think about the influence of Ottoman politics and history on the mid- to late-seventeenth-century Puritan world. Recent scholarship has reminded us of the transatlantic dimensions of Puritan culture as well as the deep connections between the Hebrew Bible, rabbinic texts, and the early modern cultures of learning.[7] Other than an occasional reference to the Puritans' contact with Barbary Coast pirates and redeemed captives from the East, however, connections between the Ottomans, the Jews living in the Ottoman Empire, and the Puritans have been overlooked.[8] By rereading Mather's sermon for strains of Ottoman influence, we can begin to appreciate the impact Ottoman events had on Puritan discourse, millennialist and otherwise, and begin to restore the Ottoman Empire to its place at the crossroads of the early modern culture to which the New England Puritans belonged.

Sevi and Christian Millennialism

How did Sevi enter into the discourse of Christian millennialism? How, after all, could one understand a messiah who urged the Jews not to convert to Christianity but to reaffirm their Judaism? For the most devoted millennialists, several answers emerged, all in accordance with the

expectation that the Jews' conversion to Christianity was imminent. Reports of Sevi's appeal and charisma were so convincing that, as Michael McKeon notes, English "observers of apparently diverse ideologies and connections – royalists, republicans, amateur scientists, professional astrologers, Puritan Prophets – were ready to entertain news of him with some enthusiasm."[9] Some, including Henry Oldenburg, the first Secretary of the Royal Society, believed that Sevi was actually Christ in another guise whose arrival the Jews took "to be the first [coming]," but that he and other Christians were "persuaded will be the second."[10] Others believed that a Jewish messiah was a necessary evil in order to bring the Jews back to Palestine, where Christ would appear and convert them.[11] Still others had more of a wait-and-see attitude. A letter from 1665 in a tract about Sevi by Joseph Hanie exemplifies this approach: "And God alone knows," the letter writer from Smyrna remarks, "whether he [Sevi] may be a means of the Conversion of that stiff-necked Generation."[12]

In England, the primary vehicle for information about Sevi was the established story about the Ten Lost Tribes and the readmission of the Jews to England. McKeon observes that at least one newspaper "connect[ed] the reports 'about three months ago' of the lost tribes of Israel with more recent news that a prophet, having secured the support of the rabbis of Jerusalem and of a number of Turkish rulers by 'working several miracles,' has foretold the restoration of Israel and named 'Sabbatai Levi [sic]' their king."[13] In letters sent by Petrus Serrarius, the celebrated Dutch millennialist and a key conduit for information about Sevi, another writer noted that the "march of our Brethren, the Ten Tribes of Israel, is now from several places confirmed to Us."[14] Further proof that these "Brethren" were the Jews traveling to see Sevi emerges in the writer's additional observation that "they have for their Chief Leader, or Captain, a Holy Man, who understandeth all Languages, and marcheth before them, doing Miracles." That New England was home to some of the Ten Lost Tribes in the persons of the American Indians made it even more likely that colonial ministers would incorporate Sevi into the Ten Tribes paradigm. In their focus on the Ten Lost Tribes and their American counterparts, however, scholarly readings of Mather's *Mystery* overlook the importance of Sevi's presence within the Ottoman Empire, the context Mather chooses to emphasize above all others.[15]

In the context of millennialism, the Ottoman Empire had always played a fixed and minor role. Confined to biblical prophecy, the so-called Turk was associated with the figure of the Eastern Antichrist, which had its roots in a passage from Revelations 16:12 about the drying up of the Euphrates.

To the extent that Sevi's Ottoman heritage or geopolitical status mattered to most Christian commentators, it was largely as a sign of the Antichrist's eventual destruction. Depending on the providential theory to which one subscribed, the destruction of the Eastern Antichrist would either precede or follow the Jews' conversion. No exception to the rule, "Sabbatai's surprising conversion to the Turkish god," McKeon writes, was for some "no longer baffling because [it was] infused with the aura of the anticipated, apocalyptic confrontation between the Turk and all Christendom."[16]

Steeped in the providential literature about the East, Mather occasionally invokes the theory of the Eastern Antichrist as well. He concedes, for example, that there are generally thought to be two heads of Antichristian powers: "the sun, that is the Pope, and the moon, that is the [Ottoman] Emperor."[17] Even while making use of this symbolism, however, Mather suggests that the Turks deserve to be regarded more favorably than in the past. Mather expresses gratitude to the Turks for having destroyed the Antichristian Roman Empire. "And the king of the North must come against this Roman Antichristian state," he writes. "Like a Whirl-wind h.e. [sic] the Turks, who arose out of the North quarters, shall make dreadful destruction on the Antichristian state; and who knoweth not that this divine prediction hath been fulfilled in those fearful devastations, which the Ottomanical family hath made upon the Roman Empire."[18] Mather's recognition of the Turks' usefulness must nevertheless have struck many of his own contemporaries as unusual, for few (if any) Christians were willing to acknowledge that the Turks were less heinous than the Catholics or might play a role in their destruction. Mather's continued references to the "Turks" reveals an awareness of the Ottomans' significance as political and cultural participants in a providential scheme.

On the whole, *The Mystery* registers a spatial displacement from the earlier geopolitical space of Jewish conversion from North and South America where the emphasis had been on finding Jews in the most unlikely places to finding them in the East, their biblical homeland. Quoting from Revelations 16.12, Mather reminds his readers that in preparation for the millennium "the sixth Angel poured out the vial upon the great River Euphrates and the water thereof was dryed up, that the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared."[19] Lest there be any confusion about who the Kings of the East might be, Mather continues: "Now by Kings of the East, the Israelitish Nation may be signified; for Israelites are so called in scripture even Kings or a Kingdom of Priests." Even as he grounds his text in the Bible passage, however, Mather does not take the original

biblical Jews as his subject. What seems important to him, by contrast, is that the Jews are in the East at the time of his writing. The Jews "may be Termed Kings of the East," he explains, ". . . because when the Israelites shall be converted, they shall especially come forth out of the Eastern parts of the world."[20]

That the Jews who will be converted shall according to Mather be living in the Ottoman Empire ushers Mather's sermon into unprecedented territory, literally and figuratively. To be sure, by the middle of the seventeenth century, a longstanding controversy involving an allegorical reading of the Jews' conversion had reached crisis proportions, causing the many millennialists who rejected such a reading to insist more vociferously than ever that the millennium would arrive only if the Jews returned literally and physically to Palestine. A quick reading of Mather's *Mystery* reveals him to be just such an anti-allegorist, but a more careful reading shows his greater interest in the Jews's location in the Ottoman Empire more generally, where they had been warmly received for the first time in large numbers.

By focusing on the Ottoman Jews in parts of the Empire other than Palestine, Mather could attribute to the Jews a cultural and biological purity central to his view of them as agents of the millennium. In earlier Puritan sermons on Jewish conversion, the emphasis had been on the diasporic nature of Jewish existence: the Jews lived as natives in diverse places and spoke a variety of languages. The Jews in South and North America, for example, who were living as Indians, had obviously adapted to their environment, taking on indigenous habits and traits. Signaling a departure from this vision, Mather's *Mystery* portrays the Jews as radically unassimilated and autonomous: "The providence of God hath suffered other Nations to have the bloud mixed very much: As you know it is with our own Nation, there is a mixture of British, Roman, Saxon, Danish, Norman bloud but as for the body of the Jewish Nation it is far otherwise." Mather makes the contrast between the British and the Jews vivid: "Let an English family live in Spain five or six hundred years successively," he writes, "and they will become Spaniards, but though a Jewish family live in Spain a thousand years, they do not degenerate into Spaniards, (for the most part)."[21] The Jews, it would appear by Mather's reckoning, were virtually immune to cultural assimilation.

Mather's assertion that Jews did not generally convert to any religion was bound to surprise some readers, because the inherent convertibility of the Jews was a set piece in the vast majority of early modern millennialist sermons. According to Christian theologians, the Jews, once a "stiff-

necked people," were, after centuries of persecution, sure to convert the next chance they got, having missed their opportunity the first time around. Regardless of whether it was popular from a theological point of view, however, Mather's assertion about the Jews was completely untrue from a historical standpoint. In addition to departing from the image of Jews in earlier conversion sermons, where they were represented as so deeply assimilated that they were in fact indigenous, the portrait of unassimilated and unconverted Jews in Mather's passage flew in the face of recent events that would have been known to almost everyone in the early modern world. Between the late fourteenth century and continuing through the fifteenth, Spanish Jews had converted to Christianity in the tens of thousands – some forcibly, others willingly. Reports detailed the almost total assimilation of the unconverted Jews who had escaped from Spain in many of the countries where the Jews had resettled. The Jews who fled Spain and Portugal for London, to take just one example, were seen less as Jews than as Spaniards who brought deeply embedded elements of Iberian culture to the British Isles.[22]

One explanation for Mather's insistence that the Jews did not mix their blood or "degenerate" through cultural assimilation can be found in the Puritans' dismissive attitude toward Catholicism. Becoming Catholic, as so many Spanish Jews did, was not what the Puritans envisioned when they thought about the Jews' conversion to Christianity. Contemporaneous reports about Jews who resettled in Protestant countries in fact made it clear that Catholicism was not the only version of Christianity attractive to Jews; Jews were willing to assimilate to Protestant culture as well. By the time of the Restoration, most Jews (all of whom were in England unofficially) were immersed in Protestant culture and differed from other royal subjects only in their religious practice. From the start, as Yosef Kaplan contends, the Jewish community in London "was deeply marked by the paths of assimilation."[23] Some Jews refused to be circumcised. Others continued to bury their dead in Christian cemeteries, even after a dedicated Jewish cemetery was available. And still others continued to use their Christian names in the public sphere.

While cultural assimilation differs from biological assimilation, we know from historical records that the two often occurred simultaneously. Yet Mather's reference to the biological Jews whose "bloud" was not "mixed" is noteworthy for two reasons: like his reference to the culturally and religiously unconverted Jews, it was 1) theologically odd and historically inaccurate, and 2) it did not coalesce with the Puritans' sense of themselves as participants in sacred history. The Puritans thought of

themselves as heirs to the biological Jews. The Jews, they conceded, had once been the chosen people, but the Puritans believed they had inherited that mantle. For the Puritans, what mattered was not their biological connection to the ancient Jews (which was nonexistent) but their spiritual one. The Puritans were the "surrogate Israel," where surrogacy privileged metaphorical and typological inheritance over a biological one.

If the convertibility of the Jews was historically accurate and spiritually desirable from a millennialist point of view, why then did Mather choose to emphasize the actual presence of unconverted, biological Jews in Ottoman lands? Judging from his discussion in *The Mystery*, Mather believed that the Jews, living in large numbers within the Ottoman Empire, had achieved a biologically significant identity that fit his providential scheme better than any prophecy. In terms of the Jews' imminent conversion, prophecies that the Jews would be scattered diasporically across the globe before their conversion and before Christ's return were less revealing for Mather than their actual presence and experience in Ottoman lands.

Mather was obsessed with the fact that large numbers of Jews were in fact living happily and successfully in the Ottoman Empire during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He acknowledged that Europe had its share of Jews, but his description of the Jews under Ottoman rule is more detailed and more socially and politically charged: "Salonica [then Ottoman, now Greek]," he writes, "is full of none but Jews, where they do (and no where else in the world do they so) if reports of Travellers may be credited, speak Hebrew as their natural language. And there are [those] that affirm that in those Cities of Salonica . . . and Constantinople there have inhabited fifteen hundred thousand Israelites."[24] The Jews in the Ottoman Empire, it would appear, were not just numerous but cohesive and culturally influential.

The number of Jews and the diversity of the empire's population as a whole reflected the deal the Ottoman government had made with its various subjects, including Christians and Jews, under the terms of what were known as the capitulations. The capitulations were treaties that allowed minorities to live independently in return for the payment of sizable taxes.[25] After their expulsion from Spain, Jews were embraced by the Ottomans, who believed Jews could make the Empire more financially and politically secure. From the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries, Jews (who lived under relative self-rule) served the Sultans as physicians, diplomats, and businessmen. Far from an ideal situation – neither Jews nor Christians were granted the same rights as Muslim subjects – the result proved productive for the Ottomans and the Jews. As Mather moves

through *The Mystery*, he seems particularly encouraged by the numbers of Jews then living in Ottoman lands and by their potential for political action as a powerful minority within a multi-ethnic Ottoman polity.

What interests Mather about the Jews's political identity, however, is not their ancient republicanism, but the peculiar form their agency took under Muslim rule. Under Muslim rule, the Jews were not a sovereign entity. Nor were they assimilated into the sovereign entity under whose rule they were living. They remained, rather, a singularity, and in doing so they compelled the sovereign to acknowledge them as part of its own identity in turn. Within the Ottoman Empire, in short, the Jews functioned as a differential body within a heterogeneous space, a model that, as the seventeenth century drew to a close in New England, would have given Mather, whose own government was wrestling with its status with respect to England, food for thought.[26] By the time Mather wrote *The Mystery*, the Restoration was nearly a decade old. Charles II was keeping a closer eye on the colonies than Cromwell or Charles I had done. The king's vigilance likely gave Mather the impetus to investigate alternative forms of identity and political allegiance like that demonstrated by the Jews under the Ottoman capitulations. Charles's not entirely successful efforts to extend religious toleration to Protestant dissenters and Catholics likely made Mather look favorably on the Ottomans' regime, which both countenanced and encouraged religious minorities.

Mather's meditation on the Jews in *The Mystery* revolved around their power and agency, unlike much other work on the Jews. For example, to Isaac Newton, who viewed the Jews' return to Palestine as a central component of a millennialist scheme, the movement of the Jews was to be accomplished without help from the Jews themselves. According to Newton, the Jews would simply "assemble" in Palestine from a place of "captivity."[27] For still other millennialists, the Jews' movement from one place to another depended exclusively on divine intervention. In one such example, published in 1658, the English Puritan John Dury described the Jews's conversion and return as a function of God's agency alone: "God doth begin to appear for them by extraordinary Providences, partly in driving them by great afflictions to look up unto him, partly in moving them to consider the cause of those Afflictions to be the sin of their FOREFATHERS[.]"[28] Dury's Jews are explicitly driven and moved by God; they do not act on their own. Other sources attributed the Jews' return to the agency of a Jewish messiah – not Sabbatai Sevi, but a man named Thomas Tany – who appeared around 1650 with "instructions" to lead the Jews to Jerusalem.[29]

It is tempting to attribute the absence of Jewish agency in these millennialist writings to one of the basic tenets of Christianity – namely, that nothing happens unless and until God puts it in motion. Two comparisons, however, enable us to see how unusual the absence of Jewish agency was even within this framework. The first can be found in the discourse of the Fifth Monarchy Men, whose violent vision of the coming millennium revolved around an army of (admittedly Christian) men. In this vision, Christian soldiers would do battle with the Antichrist, whose demise would usher in the millennium.[30] The second brings us back to writings about the Jews' readmission to England. In these narratives, England itself was the agent of the Jews' return. England's positioning itself as the last refuge of the Jews gave it the role of global savior.[31] Even after the Restoration, when a worldwide Protestant empire was no longer plausible, England's key role in the presumed coming millennium remained prominent. Rumors that Charles II was the messiah emerged in the era, linking the Jews' conversion to Christianity to the drama of England as the Christian redeemer.[32] In these millennialist visions, Christians have conspicuous agency; Jews do not.

Mather's *The Mystery*, however, portrays Jews behaving more like Christians. Mather's Jews are not "gathered" or "called," as was typical for millennialist sermons emphasizing divine causality; instead, they "flock," a kind of movement that while mass-induced is nevertheless self-propelling. The Israelites, Mather writes, "shall come flocking in marvelous multitudes, when this glorious day is come."[33] To be sure, the result of flocking as opposed to gathering or being called is the same – the Jews' reappropriation of Israel as a precursor to the millennium – but the means tell a different historical and political story.[34] So commanding was Sevi's presence that many people thought he would both return Palestine to the Jews and become Sultan in the process. Not surprisingly, according to Paul Rycaut, the English consul to Smyrna, Sevi's plan to retake Palestine angered the Sultan more than anything else he did. Citing Rycaut's report, John Evelyn remarked that it was Sevi's political rather than religious threat that incited the Sultan to punish him so severely by ordering his conversion to Islam.[35] Ironically, among a small group of Jews, the belief that Sevi would lead the Jews to Palestine grew stronger after Sevi's apostasy. These Jews saw in Sevi's conversion to Islam a secret scheme to ingratiate himself with the Sultan "precisely to carry forward the scheme of retaking Palestine under Ottoman power."[36]

Sevi might have been powerful on his own, but his political potential in Mather's account culminates in a vision of Jewish political agency as

a whole. Whether Sevi or someone else was in charge, Mather considered it incumbent on the Jews to take back for themselves a portion of the Sultan's lands. The Turk has "the land of Israel in his possession," Mather writes, and "we may be sure they [the Jews] shall never peaceably enjoy the Land of the Fathers again, as long as he hath any power to hinder it."[37] The Jews' agency in the re-conquest of Palestine intensifies with Mather's comments about the Jews as subjects and the Turks as their governors. "The salvation [of Israel] shall be glorious because the Jews will repossess Israel," Mather writes, but it will also be "glorious in respect of the multitude of them which shall be saved." In fact, the Jews, according to Mather, would return to Israel in such numbers that Israel itself would prove too small for them: "Hence the Scripture plainly intimateth," Mather adds, "that at the return of Israel, the Land of their Fathers will be too little for them, such will the multitude of their number be, and that therefore they must have other Countreys adjoining for their possession."[38]

Mather's envisioning of the Jews' retaking of Palestine marks a departure from the more metaphorical and spiritual coming of the New Jerusalem to which Mather returned with a vengeance in his "Dissertation Concerning the Future Conversion of the Jewish Nation" (1709), forty years after *The Mystery*. In the "Dissertation," the New Jerusalem is terrestrial, but its source is heavenly. "The whole world will be astonished to see New Jerusalem coming downe from heaven when the son of God shall appear," Mather writes."[39] In *The Mystery*, by contrast, the New Jerusalem is aligned with the actual Jerusalem, where the Jews were already living as Ottoman subjects and to which they would travel in vast numbers when they retook Palestine from the Sultan. Indebted to Jewish messianism for a terrestrial notion of Jerusalem in the first place, Mather's sense of an actual, empirical, and politically viable Jerusalem is nevertheless far more fleshed out and more Ottoman than the one Jewish messianism itself supplied.

One of the epistles appended to *The Mystery* by William Greenhill endorses Mather's vision of the Jews as a potential model of political and cultural identity and agency and moves that vision outward from Ottoman lands into a potentially global landscape.[40] "God shakes foundations and pillars of States when he is about doing great things for his people," Greenhill writes. "Unto these may be added . . . the strong workings of mens [sic] spirits at this day; for not only Protestants, but Papists, Jews, Turks, Mahometans, and other Idolaters do expect some great Revolution of Affairs, as Travellers that have been amongst them do relate."[41] Broadening the scope of the signs considered relevant to the millennium, Greenhill includes the "strong workings" of men of different faiths,

cultures, and nationalities. This suggests an even wider compass for Mather's millennialism than the one contemplated here. Christians expected some great event, according to Greenhill, along with "Jews, Turks, Mahometans, and other Idolators."

Greenhill's hypothesis validates our investigation into Mather's connection of the millennium with the political identity of the Jews in an Ottoman context. As Greenhill indicates, what seems important to Mather from a millennial and political point of view is not the existence of a Jewish messiah but the resonance of that messiah with people all over the world. The affiliations brought into being among the Jews of the Ottoman Empire with the Jews of Poland, the Netherlands, and beyond, as well as with the Empire's Muslims, suggest the possibility of creating cultural links among geographically remote places that could remake the world into a far more cosmopolitan place than it had been before. Such a prospect would have appealed to the besieged Puritans in New England who were looking for alternatives to their political and legal plight.

By the time Mather had finished writing *The Mystery* in June of 1666, Sevi was in prison in Gallipoli, and pamphleteers had begun to dismiss him as an impostor. Yet Mather chose to circulate the sermon at this time, suggesting that he, like many others, was either clinging to a belief in Sevi's potential or had not yet heard of Sevi's reduced circumstances. Regardless, it would have been clear by the time Mather was pursuing contacts in England to arrange for the sermon's publication a couple of years later that Sevi, having converted to Islam, was no longer a viable harbinger of the millennium. The majority of tracts about Sevi were by this time blatantly dismissive, culminating in John Evelyn's wildly popular *The History of the Three Late Famous Imposters, viz. Padre Ottomano, Mahomed Bei, and Sabatei Sevi*, published the same year as Mather's *Mystery*.[42]

Mather of course does not develop his argument in *The Mystery* by discussing Sevi's messianism in any detail, but Sevi's importance for Mather lies not in the idiosyncrasies of his story. It lies, rather, in the cultural, social, and political conditions that gave rise to his presence on the world stage, conditions that allowed the Jews to carve out a singular identity for themselves in a multi-ethnic space. Sevi was obviously discredited, but even if Mather knew about his fall from grace, the points he makes about the Ottoman Jews remained true even after Sevi's conversion to Islam: the Jews had achieved a politically and culturally significant identity under Ottoman rule that for Mather, himself alive to the twinned providential and political possibilities of his day, made their political conquest of Palestine and eventual conversion to Christianity more likely than ever.

Recognizing the relevance of the Ottomans in this history, as so few of his contemporaries did, enabled Mather to find new reasons to hope that the millennium was imminent. In revising his approach to how and when the Jews would convert to Christianity, Mather also gives us reason to believe that the question of conversion was not as one-dimensional or as prejudicial as it had once appeared. More significant still, in carving out a special space for the Ottoman Jews in his sermon, Mather gestures toward an awareness of world politics and developing relations among legally and politically unconventional entities that signals a broader and more imaginative scope for Puritan political thought than has previously been assumed.

Notes

1. Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah, 1626–1676* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), xii.
2. For more about these efforts to translate the Bible into Turkish, see Noel Malcolm, "Comenius, Boyle, Oldenburg, and the Translation of the Bible into Turkish," *Church History and Religious Culture* 87 (2007), 327–362.
3. As Colin Imber writes, "striking to the West would have been the diversity of religions among the Sultan's subjects. The Ottoman Empire was a Muslim polity, but in its European territories, Muslims, except locally, formed a minority." *Colin Imber,* Ebu's-Su'ud: The Islamic Legal Tradition (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 5.
4. Leonard Dinnerstein attaches the label to Increase Mather in *Anti-Semitism in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 8.
5. For contemporaneous reports of these discoveries, see Menassah ben Israel, *Hope of Israel* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2004) and Thomas Thorowgood, *Jewes in America, or, Probabilities that the Americans are of that Race. With the Removal of some Contrary Reasonings, and Earnest Desires for Effectual Endeavours to make them Christian* (London: Printed for W.H. for Tho. Slater, 1650).
6. For Cromwell's role in the Jews' readmission, see David S. Katz, *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England, 16023–1655* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). Interestingly, Paul Rycaut, who served as English consul to Smyrna, where Sevi was born and raised, was present at the Protector's council chamber on December 18, 1655, to hear the discussion about whether the Jews should be readmitted to England. For an account of Rycaut's relationship to Cromwell, see Sonia P. Anderson, *An English Consul in Turkey: Paul Rycaut at Smyrna, 1667–1678* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 46.
7. See, e.g., Allison P. Coudert and Jeffrey S. Shoulson, eds., *Hebraica Veritas?: Christian Hebraists and the Study of Judaism in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Achsah Guibbory, *Christian Identity, Jews, and Israel in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford:

Oxford University Press, 2010); Eric Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011); Gordon Schochet, Fania Oz Salberger, and Meirav Jones, eds., *Political Hebraism: Judaic Sources in Early Modern Political Thought* (Jerusalem: Shalem Press, 2008).

8. For more about the connections between the Puritans and the Turks, from this perspective, see, e.g., Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999) and Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean* (New York: Palgrave, 2003).
9. Michael McKeon, "Sabbatai Sevi in England," *Association of Jewish Studies Review* 2 (1977), 131–169, at 139.
10. Henry Oldenburg, July 25, 1657, in *Correspondence of Henry Oldenburg*, 13 vols., ed. A Rupert Hall and Marie Boas Hall (Milwaukee and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965–73), 1:126, 55.
11. Reference in McKeon, "Sabbatai Sevi in England," 147. See letter quoted therein.
12. Quoted in McKeon, "Sabbatai Sevi in England," 150. The letter is dated November 27, 1665.
13. McKeon, "Sabbatai Sevi in England," 145.
14. Quoted in Ernestine G. E. Van Der Wall, "The Amsterdam Millenarian Petrus Serrarius (1600–1669) and the Anglo-Dutch Circle of Philo-Judaists," in *Jewish-Christian Relations in the Seventeenth Century: Studies and Documents*, ed. J. Van Den Berg and Ernestine G. E. Van Der Wall (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988), 89–94.
15. Petrus Serrarius, "The Last Letters from Dr. Serrarias, and the City of Jerusalem, concerning the further Proceedings of the Jews, in order to their Conversion" (London: Imprinted for G. Cotton, 1665), 4. Most scholars of the period have followed suit. For Reiner Smolinksi, for example, Mather's *Mystery* is one of several sermons, including his later "Dissertation Concerning the Future Conversion of the Jewish Nation" (1709), in which the focus is on the dispersion of the Jews. Linda Munk also sees ties between the discovery of the Jewish Indians and Mather's agenda in *The Mystery*. See Reiner Smolinksi, "Israel Redivivus: The Eschatological Limits of Puritan Typology in New England," *New England Quarterly* 63 (1990), 357–395; Linda Munk, *The Devil's Mousetrap: Redemption and Colonial American Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 54; and Stephen Arch, *Authorizing the Past: The Rhetoric of History in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Chicago: Northern Illinois University Press, 1994), 102.
16. McKeon, "Sabbatai Sevi in England," 159.
17. Increase Mather, *The Mystery of Israel's Salvation* (London: Printed for John Allen, 1669), 30.
18. Mather, *Mystery*, 28.
19. Mather, *Mystery*, 30–31.
20. Mather, *Mystery*, 30–31.

21. Mather, *Mystery*, 13.
22. See Yosef Kaplan, "The Jewish Profile of the Spanish-Portuguese Community of London During the Seventeenth Century," *Judaism* 41 (1992), 229–240, at 229.
23. Kaplan, "The Jewish Profile," 233.
24. Mather, *Mystery*, 54–55.
25. For more about the capitulations, see, for example, Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 68–98.
26. See Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude, War and Democracy in an Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 99, for a discussion of the "multitude," a political order that resembles that of the Ottoman Jews in the early modern period.
27. See J. E. Force, "The Virgin, The Dynamo, and Newton's Prophetic History," in *The Millenarian Turn: Millenarian Contexts of Science, Politics, and Everyday Anglo-American Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001), 67–94, 74.
28. John Dury, *An Information Concerning the Present State of the Jewish Nation in Europe and Judea* (London: Printed for R. W. for Thomas Brewster, 1658), 2.
29. Quoted in David S. Katz, "The Restoration of the Jews: Thomas Tany to World Jewry (1653)" in *Jewish-Christian Relations in the Seventeenth Century: Studies and Documents*, ed. J. Van Den Berg and Ernestine G. E. Van Der Wall (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988), 187–206, 187.
30. B.S. Capp, "Extreme Millenarianism," in *Puritans, The Millenium, and the Future of Israel: Puritan Eschatology, 1600–1660*, ed. Peter Toon (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1970), 66–90, at 78.
31. For more information about England's sense of itself as redeemer, see Arthur H. Williamson, "Britain and the Beast: The Apocalypse and the Seventeenth-Century Debate about the Creation of the British State," in *The Millenarian Turn: Millenarian Contexts of Science, Politics, and Everyday Anglo-American Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001), 15–28.
32. Richard H. Popkin, "Millenarianism in England, Holland, and America: Jewish and Christian Relations in England, Holland, and Newport, Rhode Island," in *Philosophy, History and Social Action: Essays in Honor of Lewis Feuer*, ed. Sidney Hook, William L. O'Neill, and Roger O'Toole (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988), 349–372, 354.
33. Mather, *Mystery*, 54.
34. David Halperin, *Sabbatai Sevi: Testimonies to a Fallen Messiah* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2012), 8.
35. John Evelyn, *The History of the Three Late Famous Imposters, viz. Padre Ottomano, Mahomed Bei, and Sabatei Sevi* (London: Printed for Henry Herringman, 1669), 90.

36. Marc David Baer, *The Dönme: Jewish Converts, Muslim Revolutionaries, and Secular Turks* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 4.
37. Mather, *Mystery*, 25.
38. Mather, *Mystery*, 57.
39. Mather, "A Dissertation," 27.
40. Reiner Smolinski identifies him as William Greenhill. See Smolinski, "Israel Redivivus: The Eschatological Limits of Puritan Typology in New England," *The New England Quarterly* 63.3 (1990), 357–395, 393.
41. William Greenhill, "To the Reader," in Mather, *Mystery*, third unnumbered page.
42. Nor was there a reappraisal that might have changed Mather's mind. All subsequent retellings of the episode followed similar lines, ridiculing the messiah as well as earlier millennialist readings of the episode. The most explicit of these was an anonymous tract, *The Devil of Delphos, or, The Prophets of Baal: Containing an Account of the Notorious Impostor, cald SABATAI SEVI, Pretended Messiah of the Jews, in 1666* . . . For more on the history of narratives about Sevi, see Richard H. Popkin, "Three English Tellings of the Sabbatai Zevi," *Jewish History* 8 (1994), 43–54.

CHAPTER 4

Benjamin Colman, Laughter, and Church Membership in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts

Michael Schuldiner

Despite the significant anti-laughter rhetoric of seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Puritan churchmen, in 1707 Boston clergyman Benjamin Colman urged a radical concept: that mirth had a proper place in the spiritual life of a New England Puritan. Colman's argument for mirth in the meetinghouse was indeed a radical proposition; it was also the result of what had been a significant problem for New England congregationalism in the latter decades of the seventeenth century.[1] New England's ministers had been arguing for some time that overly restrictive church admission requirements prevented and discouraged robust church attendance. Yet these debates about admission and attendance resulted in innovations that focused primarily on the practices of those already attending church.[2] Benjamin Colman, leader of the Brattle Street Church founded in 1699, took a more tolerant view. In his pamphlet, *The Government and Improvement of Mirth . . . More especially designed for the Use and Recommended to the Serious perusal of Young People, and in Particular the Young Gentlemen of Boston* (1707), Colman made a specific play to attract young people, especially young men, to his church. Colman's concern was not how to make church membership less restrictive (by keeping people from the Lord's table, or communion), but how to make church more inviting in the first place.

This chapter addresses the evolution of church polity in Boston during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. By examining the 1699 *Manifesto* of Benjamin Colman's new Brattle Street Church, we are given an opportunity to explore how ministers attempted to alter congregational church polity to make the communion table less restrictive. By examining contemporary views about laughter, we can understand better how Colman's book, *Government and Improvement of Mirth* (1707), was written in response to the dominant view of clergy, which held against mirth.

Colman's more liberal project, which argued that laughter in the church had its place, enabled him to offer prospective church members a more attractive church environment. As with Colman's innovations, offered in his church's *Manifesto* of 1699, this more open attitude, announced in 1707, was designed to make the church more appealing to prospective members. Combining theology, social and political pragmatism, and new ideas about psychology and philosophy, Colman's reforms placed the Brattle Street Church on the vanguard of New England Puritanism's negotiation with modernity.

Communion and the Franchise at the Brattle Street Church

When the Brattle Street Church opened in Boston in 1699, it instituted, contrary to the will of other local ministers (including Increase Mather), a new set of requirements for attendance at the Lord's Supper, or communion. Solomon Stoddard had much earlier done away with the restriction requiring a relation of saving faith for participation in communion at his church in Northampton. In 1699, the Brattle Street Church *Manifesto* did the same: Colman effectively removed a restriction upon those who might be contemplating church membership. Colman's gesture made the Brattle Street church a clearly more liberal and inclusive institution within Boston's larger congregational community.

Colman introduced another change, as well. Historically, New England congregational practice had allowed that those attending the Lord's Supper would judge whether a prospective communicant offered a testimony of faith sufficient to enable membership at the Lord's table. At Brattle Street, by contrast, the fitness of a prospective communicant was judged largely by the minister. Colman's justification for this change was provided in his pamphlet, *The Gospel Order Revived, Being an Answer to a Book Lately Set Forth by the Reverend Mr. Increase Mather* (1700). In his own pamphlet, *The Order of the Gospel, Professed and Practised by the Churches of Christ in New England* (1700), Mather had written a complaint about the innovations regarding the Lord's Supper introduced earlier by Minister Solomon Stoddard. Yet Mather was clearly attacking Colman and his church's *Manifesto*. In *The Gospel Order Revived*, Colman argued that the reason why only the elders should judge an applicant's worthiness for communion lay in the problem of the church structure: many worthy applicants who had offered themselves for the Lord's Supper had been turned down by the communicants. The communion table had become what we might today call "clubby."[3] In recent years, groups of existing communicants had

tended to admit mostly the loud and presumptuous people who had no difficulty presenting themselves for communion and turning away those who expressed doubt or spiritual concernment. Further, Colman believed that prospective communicants were being admitted on the basis of relations they had not written themselves. Such people were hypocritical, in Colman's view.[4] He argued that the Lord's table was comprised of a small group of the wrong people who were turning away many truly deserving individuals and preventing applications by other worthy people.[5] Colman believed that Church elders alone (the minister and perhaps the catechist, if there were one) should determine, after private consultation with the applicant, who was fit for the Lord's Supper. He argued further that there should be no need for anything like a public relation of conversion.[6]

Colman thus removed significant restrictions on church membership. He also created innovations in church polity. As written into the *Manifesto* of the Brattle Street Church, both men and women, whether communicants or not, were offered the right to vote for their minister. Such a move in effect institutionalized for the first time the enfranchisement of women,[7] even as it also allowed for the enfranchisement of men who were not in full communion membership. If full membership in a church were no longer the criteria for voting in church, then those who attended the Brattle Street Church and supported their minister would be able to elect their church officers. John Higginson and Nicholas Noyes, probably at Increase Mather's instigation, wrote a letter to the "Manifesto Church," complaining about the enfranchisement of women. As everyone knew, they insisted, "the females are certainly more than the males, and consequently the choice of ministers is put into their hands." Moreover, "the baptized adult non-communicants, in most if not all the assemblies in the land, are more than the communicants." In short, female communicants who outnumber the men, or non-communicants (both men and women) would determine who the new ministers would be.[8] This was opening the church doors to trouble, they argued.

Colman's abandonment of the public relation of faith was not an innovation in New England, although it might have been in Boston, but enfranchising women was new. Also, voting on church matters was a privilege designed to make full communion and membership more appealing by opening new doors, especially to women. The less restrictive communion policy might have been a product of the evolution of church polity. The new voting policy, which must certainly have been attractive to some prospective parishioners, was also a product of Enlightenment thought.

The Case Against Laughter in Puritan New England[9]

Most people (not just Puritans) in the seventeenth century were suspicious of laughter. A tradition of secular anti-laughter rhetoric dominated attitudes about social decorum of the period. However, the arguments against laughter, even when a product of secular standards of decorum, were also, at least in part, moral. Edward Hyde (the Earl of Clarendon, who originated the Clarendon Code against Puritans and dissenters of all types), a staunch advocate of the Church of England, was dubious about laughter. In his view, "Laughter is a Disease, it proceeds frequently from the Spleen, from the Mother, and from many other bodily Distempers." He added that laughter "is a Sin when it is produced (as it is often) from the Content wicked Men take in the Misfortunes and Afflictions of those they do not love." In short, "it inhabits the Face and Countenance of Fools and Idiots," he concluded.[10] Laughter was an illness in Clarendon's view, a "disease," sometimes congenital and sometimes simply the product of a bad body part. Laughter was a sin when it was directed at the unfortunate, however much the unfortunate might include one's enemy. Laughter, it seems, was an aberration to be avoided. People were cautioned against raucous belly-laughter, and they tended toward publicly grave demeanors. John Eliot, primarily known for his work with indigenous inhabitants and his early treatises on New England church government, disparaged laughing, especially by colony leaders. In his *Communion of Churches* (1665), Eliot described a form of church government based upon Exodus and ruled by Councils. Those who serve such Councils (hinting about those who govern New England), he insisted, should "strive to be patterns to all men," conducting themselves "[i]n *Gravity*: not full of Mirth, Laughter, and Jesting."[11] Eliot felt that the same held true for all clergy and the saints elected by God for salvation. Westfield minister Edward Taylor provides another example. Taylor's physical character, according to his grandson Ezra Stiles (the early president of Yale), was small, and he was "serious and grave."[12] Laughter was no laughing matter.

The New England clergy were fond of pointing out that while not all sinners got their just deserts right away – men continued to laugh their lives away in sin – eventually their laughter would turn to sorrow. Michael Wigglesworth phrased it this way: "'Tis better now to mourn / And to rejoice hereafter: / Then for to wail eternally / For sinful mirth and laughter."[13] In the *Whole Book of Psalms* (1640), Psalm 37 shows David, confident that although "[t]he wicked plots against the just, / gnashing at him his teeth. / The Lord shall laugh at him: because / his day coming he

seeth." God laughs, many conceived, because God would make sure that evil people will get what they deserve in Hell. Perhaps because sinful men laughed, God laughed at sinful men; but as with Plato's view in the *Republic* – that laughter was reserved solely for the gods – Wigglesworth assigns God the distinction of having the last and only laugh.

But not all laughter in the Bible was scornful or sinful; some laughter was just plain "mad" (by which was meant egregiously untoward or unseemly), given the harsh and dreadful circumstances of the world in which such laughter takes place. Cotton Mather pointed out that "the Preacher tells us, in Ecc. 2.2. *I said of Laughter, it is mad*."[14] Laughter for the New England Puritan was not just "mad" in the sense that it might appear senseless to indulge in laughter when death loomed so near. Laughter was also associated with the type of madness in which an individual had lost control of himself for reasons that might be clinical or, more likely, supernatural. Puritans appear to have recognized, at least in some individuals, a physically unusual condition that consisted in excessive laughter. For example, in *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences*, Increase Mather recorded inexplicable phenomena. Among these, Mather wrote of "a Man that if Pork or anything made of Swines flesh were brought into the room, he would fall into a convulsive *Sardonian Laughter*." He added, "*he would continue laughing so long as the swine was held before him, and laught himself to death if the swine was not removed in time*."[15] Mather provides no explanation for the endless fit of laughter except that such inexplicable occurrences were harbingers of the final days. Sometimes laughter was attributed to people considered witches. Thus, John Hale wrote, in *A Modest Inquiry into the Nature of Witchcraft* (1702), that Mary Johnson of Hartford, Connecticut, was discovered to be a witch when she apparently agreed with the Devil to fetch him swine. When Johnson saw the Devil driving swine before him, it gave rise to an "immoderate laughter," leading her neighbors to consider her a witch. She subsequently confessed.[16] People judged to be heretics and said to be under the influence of Satan sometimes laughed when they were tortured. Guy de Brez, himself a martyr, wrote in 1665 about Anabaptist Thomas Muntzer, who had been preaching rebellion against European nobility and was hounded about the land and eventually captured and interrogated. He was silent until tortured, at which point he cried out in pain. The Duke of Saxony reminded Muntzer of the ruin Muntzer had brought upon others who were being slain because of Muntzer's sedition. Muntzer then entered into "much laughing, that *they would so have it*."[17] Muntzer apparently had sufficient wit to

realize the irony of his situation as he quoted the words of Jesus before his accusers. For those in his midst, Muntzer's laughter could only be attributed to Satan's control.

In the view of many Puritans, God their father could laugh, but only to deride sinful people for their impenitence. *The Whole Book of Psalms* (1640) invited a wrathful God to visit the sinful:

> The strong causlesse combine
> Against me, not for my crime, Lord,
> nor any sin of mine.
> . . .
>
> Lord God of hoast, thou Israels God,
> Rise to visit therefore
> All heathen; who sin willfully,
> . . .
>
> Behold they belch out with their mouths
> Within their lips swords are:
> For who is he (doe these men say)
> Which us at all doth heare
> But thou O Lord, at them wilt laugh,
> And heathens all wilt mock.

Here, in Psalm 59, David asserts that God will deal in mocking laughter with enemies of the righteous, because they are also the enemies of God. More than one Puritan divine found *Psalms* appropriate for a sermon on the sinful and impenitent. John Dod, Cotton Mather, and Samuel Willard all found occasion to use the Psalms and their presentation of a laughing, scornful God to bring home to the wayward the need to repent of their evil doing.[18] And, of course, there were likely other ministers who felt similarly.

The example for all Christians, including Puritans, was Jesus, who led an exemplary life. In the sixteenth century, people assumed that Jesus walked in humility and wisdom, without humor. Increase Mather wrote explicitly about Jesus's grave demeanor: "We never read of Christs laughing," but we learn "of his weeping more than once. He Wept over the grave of Lazarus; He Wept over Jerusalem. And we read of his Sighing; He fetcht deep Sighs and Groans, several times. But we never read any thing of his Mirth. He was a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief."[19] For Mather, Christ's weeping was worth emulating. No wonder Mather got upset with Benjamin Colman.

Benjamin Colman and the Case for Joy, Mirth, and Sometimes Laughter

The idea of a cheerful, if not joyous, religion where one might find mirth and laughter was promoted by Benjamin Colman as a new incentive to young people to become active in Massachusetts congregations. His motivations were twofold: to increase church membership generally, but also to bring young people to his own church. The growth rate of church membership at the Brattle Street Church had declined. Colman's suggestion that mirth might be appropriately introduced to an audience of Christians was partly a product of Enlightenment liberality. But he also placed his arguments squarely within both the Westminster Confession and contemporary ideas about moral law.

Colman probably first gained an opening for Enlightenment thinking by way of Harvard College, where he was a student under the tutelage of John Leverett and William Brattle. These tutors, themselves younger men, admired the "new learning," and they knew about the work of Newton, Boyle, Descartes, and, of course, John Locke. Leverett and Brattle introduced at Harvard the work of Anglican ministers "who were," in the words of Harry S. Stout, "admired for their open-minded tolerance of different religious practices (including Puritan non-conformity) but even more for their brilliant style and clear thought."[20] John Tillotson, who had started out as a Puritan and eventually became Archbishop of Canterbury, was Leverett's favorite author. Colman was Leverett's favorite pupil and likely acquired Leverett's intellectual tastes.[21] Colman was one of Increase Mather's communicants at Old North Church for part of the time he was at Harvard, but Leverett's and Brattle's training helped him find himself more liberal opportunities. After receiving his Master's degree from Harvard in 1695,[22] Colman went to England, where he was able to imbibe Enlightenment learning first hand.[23]

Colman returned to Boston four years later in order to become the minister of a new congregational church in Boston, the church that would eventually come to be called the Brattle Street Church. The new church departed in some obvious respects from the church polity of Boston congregationalism. The "undertakers" of the new church, in particular Colman's former Harvard tutors Leverett and Brattle, determined that the "Holy Scriptures" would be "publicly read every Sabbath in the worship of God" and that the church would not require "the Relation of Experiences which were imposed in the other Churches in the Town, in order to the Admission of Persons to the Lords table."[24] Making the scriptures central

to worship, allowing for church elders to determine admission, and not requiring that the communicant's relation be public – all of these were innovations in church polity. Colman's particular contribution would relate to the opening up of the church to young people, and to mirth.

Any theologian who considered laughter a positive force would be one willing to view laughter from its biblical context, where the so-called laws of nature and of common sense might apply. We associate these concepts with the Enlightenment, although one finds terms such as "the law" or "light of nature" even in orthodox statements such as the Westminster Confession. Orthodox Puritanism, however, was based largely upon the principle of *sola scriptura*. Enlightenment theologians, such as John Tillotson, Charles Morton, and Benjamin Colman, regarded the Bible as authoritative, but they were also moralists who were comfortable referring to natural law and rational thinking.[25] Morality – that is, doing what would permit mankind to live harmoniously with others while at the same time providing for one's own interests – was governed by natural law, taken as available to all by tacit agreement. When reasoning about what was best for mankind, such reasoning entered intellectual debates as "common sense." Although he was a theologian – or perhaps *because* he was a theologian – Colman sought to introduce these newer ideas into church life.

Colman's *Manifesto* of 1699 and his *Government and Improvement of Mirth* of 1707 were designed to increase church membership and to create within the meeting house a more cheerful environment. Colman sought to retrieve the reputation of New England's churches as gloomy places. For this, his arguments extended well beyond what scriptures or biblical commentary offered. Colman used common sense. Colman conjectured in his treatise on mirth that perhaps there is a power of melancholy operating in Boston's churches that kept people from offering themselves for baptism. He suggested that Christians in Massachusetts might simply have the wrong opinion of what true religion should be. Holiness should, he conceived, allow for laughter, joy, mirth, happiness. Laugher was not "injurious to God." Nor was laughter a "scandal to religion." Laughter might actually represent spiritual joy in the contemplation of the idea of heaven. According to Colman, those who wrote dourly about New England religious practice were sending the wrong message abroad about New England's churches. Such "men wrong Religion by this ill account of it, and must answer for disparaging the Service of Christ, & giving an ill report of the Land of Promise, as if there were Monsters and Giants in the way terrible to force thro'." Those who were "melancholy Christian[s]" might "tempt [their] Neighbour[s] to suspect Christianity to be a grievous and morose kind of

Life," he said. But such an approach was a "most certain way to obstruct the growth of Christs Kingdom; for you know the vain World are stumbled at any thing that looks this way." He concluded, "therefore turn the bright side to 'em, and let 'em see that you enjoy more pleasure in Serving God, than they can in serving divers lusts and pleasures."[26]

Benjamin Colman had a practical reason to advocate for laughter and mirth in 1707: increasing church membership. After an initial burst of growth in membership at the founding of the Brattle Street Church in 1699, there was a decline in growth rate thereafter. The initial burst in membership at the time the church opened might easily have been in response to the innovations it had offered. In order to advocate for moderate mirth and laughter as incentives to young people to return to the church, Colman would need to discuss some of the more salient points made in the Bible against laughter. Colman addressed the question as to whether Jesus ever laughed, a question that Increase Mather had answered with a negative. According to Colman, however, Jesus was not a stranger to mirth and good cheer. It was well known that Jesus attended the wedding at Cana in the Galilee. About this, Colman wrote:

> *If Mirth might not be decent & lawful, our Blessed Saviour wou'd not have ever countenanc'd it* . . . [I]t is not to be doubted but there was Sober Mirth among [the wedding guests], as there was plenty of Wine; *Wine that maketh glad mens hearts*, and ministers to their Mirth; and lest there shou'd be any want of it, as there had like to have been, he supply'd 'em by his Divine Power. Hereby he sanctify'd the Solemnity and the Joy of it. As also elsewhere he intimates, that the Sorrow were improper & indecent at such a time and place.[27]

Colman's message commenting on John 2.1–11 makes the point that Jesus, when called upon, participated in the joy that was to be had at a wedding. In fact, Jesus contributed to the festivities by turning water into wine (the first of Jesus's miracles). However, the wine imbibed (apart from that needed to sanctify the solemnities) was not sufficient to make for drunken foolishness, only "Sober Mirth." Despite the disparagement of laughter by Puritan divines and others, Benjamin Colman's *The Government & Improvement of Mirth*, even as it recognized the presence of debauched and evil mirth, encouraged sober mirth and laughter among the baptized and true spiritual joy (from which laughter might also arise) in those who had come to saving faith and full communion.[28] For Colman, there was a connection between that sober mirth of the Christian and the spiritual joy of the saint. Mirth for Colman was a fact of being, like sorrow.

Some individuals were given to cheer and mirth, Colman realized, and some were given to sorrow. Those given to sorrow found a place in New England's churches, because they could present to their ministers their personal sorrows and confront their sins, the cause of their sorrows. Such presentation of sorrow placed them in a state that Puritan theologians called "preparation" for saving faith. But Colman allows that some individuals were not by nature sorrowful and were instead given to mirth and laughter. These individuals, Colman thought, were never given reason to believe that they had a place at church. In fact, these people learn to think that church is no place for those with cheerful dispositions, and so they take their mirth and laughter to the tavern. In the opening sermon in his *Government & Improvement of Mirth*, Colman tries to convince such individuals that they should take their cheer to church. Once in church, they might realize their cheer arising from an emotionally profitable life could be turned into a sense of God's extraordinary gifts to them. Such life experience could be meditated upon and would eventually translate into a sense of having been of the elect and saved by God, thereby yielding that spiritual joy that Colman calls for in the saint.

As Colman explains in his section on "Justification of Moderate Mirth," the tendency to mirth is a product of both "Nature" (human nature) and God. Some are naturally given to mirth. An immoderate use of mirth, mirth in excess, can become vice. But Colman explains that "*were this* [mirth] *indecent in all Circumstances, Nature had not put this Faculty and Disposition into us, and made it so beautiful in us*." Thus, in Colman's view, mirth is not always of the immoderate sort that is given to vice. Mirth can also generate a certain beauty in man. Just as John Locke had argued with reference to social relationships, Colman explains how both natural law and divine intervention framed human life:

> God has so form'd and fram'd us, and it is his Work; and tis most plain that he has grac'd and ennobled his Creature in it. For the Countenance of Man is the more beautiful and graceful for its *Smiles*. A glad Countenance transforms a man, and makes quite another Person; the Eye has new Life, and the Mein is Superiour & Angelick.[29]

Colman thus reasoned that God has formed and framed mankind, and it is His work that transforms the natural disposition to mirth given to him by Nature into a graceful state resembling that of angels.

Colman explains in *The Government and Improvement of Mirth* how the lives of communicants (and especially of visible saints) should be spiritually joyous lives, filled with song and laughter, and not "lumpish." He derides joyless people:

> *Is heaven before you Inconsiderable*? (for I speak of such as are bound thither) that *One Hope of your Calling in Hope of ETERNAL LIFE, which God who cannot Lye had promised!* Is your Hope poor? the Promises not precious? & Grace (the Unspeakable Gift) not felt? How do you disparage the Riches of Mercy, by a heavy lumpish Life? How ill a Return to the Lord, who hath *done great things for you, whereof you ought to be glad*, which should *fill your Mouth with Laughter, and your Tongue with Singing*."[30]

When Colman speaks here of an experience of God which should "*fill your Mouth with Laughter, and your Tongue with Singing*," he is quoting Psalms 126:2. Speaking specifically to the elect, who have been regenerated and received the promises of reward eternal, Colman admonishes those who are still living lives of heavy gloom. Gloomy living is a poor way to repay God for his gift of Grace. One should return God's favor of Grace with that laughter and song that comes of such glad tidings as the news that one has been saved from eternal death and damnation.

Toward Enlightened Laughter

New England churches were working through an era of transformation. There was innovation in the 1699 Brattle Street Church *Manifesto*, but omitting the requirement of a public relation of saving faith before admission to the Lord's table in 1699 was not an enlightenment project. Offering mirth and good cheer to prospective church members in 1707 clearly was an enlightened view. Suggesting that worship could consist of mirth and laughter of even a sober variety was clearly designed to make return to the church more inviting. Moreover, the suggestion that the church might compete with the tavern for the society of the young had larger societal implications. If there was a gulf between religious and secular life in Boston, Colman's suggestion that there was a place in the church for laughter was designed to fill that gap.

Colman was clearly ahead of his time. Adam Potkay discusses the prominence of the idea of spiritual joy in the vocabulary of English divines of the period following the Reformation. In particular, he focuses on the manner in which spiritual joy was always attendant upon the experience of conversion, so much so that for Puritans such as William Perkins it became the index that an individual had received the grace of regeneration.[31] Spiritual joy for Colman was complete joy, found first in the experience of the Spirit as it consoles man for his sin and justifies him before God. Afterwards, by virtue of one's regenerate "will," this spiritual joy could be experienced in a variety of contexts, most prominently of course in the

contemplation of and meditation directly upon God and Christ.[32] "Mediately," however, the regenerate also experience holy joy "in the Contemplation of his [God's] WORKS . . . The Invisible things of Him from the Creation of the World, are clearly seen, being Understood from the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and Godheard. And how we shou'd Joy in Him, in the Meditation of his Glories and they shine forth in the Works of CREATION."[33] Colman reasoned that the mind and will regenerated by the Spirit of God finds joy in all God's works of creation. His acknowledgment that spiritual joy appears first as the regenerating work of the Spirit, and afterwards by virtue of that work of regeneration when contemplating the works of creation, brings to mind Jonathan Edwards's "Personal Narrative." There, Edwards writes of experiencing spiritual joy first when receiving the testimony of the Spirit in the words of I Timothy. 1:17: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen." Never before had Edwards experienced such an "inward, sweet delight in God and divine things." It is after having received the testimony of the Spirit witnessing to his soul the truth of Scripture and after experiencing regeneration that Edwards is able to experience a spiritual joy in God's work of creation while walking in his father's pasture. While looking up at the skies and clouds, there came into his mind, says Edwards, "so sweet a sense of the glorious *majesty* and *grace* of God" that he could not find words to express what had taken place. There is perhaps no better account of what true joy meant to the Puritan than Edwards' account here of that "sweetness" he experienced upon reading the Bible and when walking alone in his father's pasture.[34] The path toward such a relation lay in the thorny transformation brought about by the growing enlightenment's impact on religious thought and practice.

In large measure, the Brattle Street Church *Manifesto*'s offer in 1699 of communion without public relation was a product of a larger development in church polity that had been taking place since virtually the implementation of the requirement, as well as the concern with church membership that had appeared at almost the inception of the colony. After all, the New England experiment was about the young, the future generations, if it was about anything at all. But it was, for Puritans, also about the millenium and the second coming that could take place in New England if the right opportunity arose. Colman's Calvinism, his insistence in the *Manifesto* that the Westminster Confession served him and his congregation as well as any other congregation in Boston, indicates that New England's original purposes and its failures were as present to him in 1699 as they were to

the elders at the Reforming Synod of 1679. It seems also to be the case, however, that Colman saw more clearly than perhaps reality warranted a church to which Enlightenment laws and reason – and enlightened laughter – might provide support and thereby help preserve the Puritan mission, a mission that included bringing the elect to the joy of spiritual fulfillment.

Notes

1. Colman was arguing against what Virgil B. Heltzel ("Chesterfield and the Anti-Laughter Tradition," *Modern Philology* 26 [1928]) identified as an anti-laughter "tradition" that was embedded in social decorum. Like many colleagues, Colman noted the reluctance of the baptized elect to claim saving faith and take their place at the Lord's table and thus in civil government. Harry S. Stout examines the relationship between church membership and New England's changing demographics (*The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1986], 132–133). Colman was not the sole innovator to make communion less restrictive. By 1677, Solomon Stoddard admitted individuals to communion on the basis of only knowledge of doctrine and non-scandalous behavior (see Thomas M. Davis, *A Reading of Edward Taylor* [Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992], 135). Colman's effort in 1707 to make the church more attractive by arguing that there was a place for sober mirth in the meeting house, however, was clearly without precedent in New England.
2. Puritans believed that children of the regenerate carried the seeds of regeneration, which would be passed on from one generation to another. By 1640, tests were established to determine who was regenerate, creating a special difficulty for children of regenerate parents who did not claim regeneracy. Could unregenerate children of regenerate (and baptized) parents have their offspring baptized? It was hoped that the 1648 Cambridge Platform would focus on the problem of baptism, but it did not. In 1657, an Assembly of Ministers met to discuss the issue. Richard Mather wrote their opinion in *A Disputation Concerning Church Members and Their Children in Answer to XXI Questions*, which stated that the offspring in question could be baptized if the baptized parents understood the grounds of religion, were not scandalous, and owned covenant. However, not all ministers subscribed to the majority view, and in 1662 the "Half-Way" Synod was held, giving the full weight of an eighty-member Synod to support the view that baptized but still unregenerate children could have their offspring baptized. Prominent clergy – including Increase Mather – opposed the idea, but, as Robert Pope states, "Massachusetts had a new orthodoxy" (*The Half-Way Covenant: Church Membership in Puritan New England* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969], 1–74, 49). Restrictions on those who could attend the Lord's supper would later be lifted.

3. Colman, et al., *Gospel Order Revived*, states that that "many whose Fathers and themselves were once of the visible Church, are now strangely left out, scarce any face of Religion remaining among them" ("The Epistle Dedicatory," [iii]).
4. Colman, et al., *Gospel Order Revived*, 9.
5. *New England's Annoyances: America's First Folk Song*, ed. J. A. Leo Lemay (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1985), 19, makes the same point, but suggests the problem is not a severe one. The first printed edition of the *Annoyances* is dated 1758, but Lemay argues that the original is much earlier.
6. Colman, et al., *Gospel Order Revived*, 3–9. See also the founding document of the Brattle Street Church, *A Manifesto or Declaration, Set forth by the Undertakers of the New Church Now Erected in Boston in New England, November 17, 1699* (Boston, 1699), 2, written a year before *Gospel Order Revived*.
7. See Emory Elliott, *Power and the Pulpit in Puritan New England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 57–58.
8. Howard C. Adams, in "Benjamin Colman: A Critical Biography." PhD Diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1976, 114. Eliot (1975, 58) explains that Cotton Mather thought roughly two of every three communicants in his vicinity were females.
9. For discussions of laughter in early New England, see Louis B. Wright, "Human Comedy in America" in *The Comic Imagination*, ed. Louis D. Rubin, Jr. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1973), 17; Richard Boyd Hauck, *A Cheerful Nihilism: Confidence and "The Absurd" in American Humorous Fictio*n (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), 15–21; and W. Howland Kenney, *Laughter in the Wilderness: Early American Humor to 1783*, ed. with introd., W. Howland Kenney (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1976), 11–12. Michael Dunne, *Calvinist Humor in American Literature* (Baton Rouge: Louisianan State University Press, 2007), adopts and extends Kenney's thesis without attribution. Several other studies are valuable for this investigation: Susanne Rupp, "Milton's Laughing God," in *A History of English Laughter: Laughter from Beowulf to Beckett and Beyond*, ed. Manfred Pfister (Amsterdam: Rudopi, 2002), 52; M. A. Screech, *Laughter at the Foot of the Cross* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999).
10. Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *A Collection Of Several Tracts of the Right Honourable Edward, Earl of Clarendon . . . Published from his Lordship's Original Manuscripts* (London, 1727), 594.
11. John Eliot, *Communion of Churches: Or, The Divine Management of Gospel-Churches by the Ordinance of Councils, Constituted in Order according to the SCRIPTURES* (Cambridge, 1665), 37, a revision of his earlier *The Christian Commonwealth*. See Paul Royster's edition (Lincoln Nebraska: Faculty Publications, UNL Libraries, 2005), 5: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libraryscience/19 accessed March 6, 2009. See also *The Puritan in America: A Narrative Anthology*, ed. Alan Heimert and Andrew Delbanco (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1985), 193–194.

12. Cited in Donald E. Stanford, "Introduction," *The Poems of Edward Taylor* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), xlvii.
13. Michael Wigglesworth, *Meat out of the Eater OR Meditations Concerning The Necessity, End, and Usefulness of AFFLICTIONS Unto GODS Children*. 4th edn. (Boston, 1689), 3; see also J[onathan] Mitchel, "On the following Work, and It's Author," in Wigglesworth, *The Day of Doom* (Cambridge, MA, 1666), np.
14. Cited in Cotton Mather, *Warnings from the Dead. Or Solemn Admonitions Unto ALL PEOPLE; but Especially unto Young Persons to Beware Of such EVILS as would bring them to the Dead* (Boston, 1692).
15. Increase Mather, *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* (Boston, 1684), 101–102.
16. John Hale, *A Modest Inquiry Into the Nature of Witchcraft, And How Persons Guilty of that Crime may be Convicted: and the means used for their Discovery Discussed*. (Boston, 1702), 19–20. See also Cotton Mather, *Memorable Providences* (Boston, 1689), in which a curious case of laughter defines the maniacal quality of an individual possessed by the Devil.
17. Guy de Brez, *The Rise, Spring and Foundations of the Anabaptists, Or Re-baptized of our Time* (Cambridge, MA, 1668), 9.
18. John Dod, *Old Mr. Dod's Sayings; OR, A Posie gathered out of Mr. Dod's Garden*. Collected by R.T. (Cambridge, MA, 1673), 8; Cotton Mather, *A Servant of the Lord, not Ashamed of his Lord. A Short Essay To Fortify the Minds of ALL Persons, Especially of YOUNG Persons Against the Discouragements of PIETY* (Boston, 1704), 26; Samuel Willard, *Impenitent Sinners Warned of their Misery and Summoned to Judgment* (Boston, 1698).
19. Increase Mather, *The Blessed Hope, And the Glorious Appearing of the Great GOD our Saviour, Jesus Christ* (Boston, 1701), 64.
20. Stout, *The New England Soul*, 136.
21. Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 241.
22. Adams, "Benjamin Colman," 22.
23. For Colman's Enlightenment religious views, see Theodore Hornberger, "Benjamin Colman and the Enlightenment," *New England Quarterly* 12 (1939), 227–240; Theresa Toulouse, "'Syllabical Idolatry': Benjamin Colman and the Rhetoric of Balance," *Early American Literature* 18 (1983–84), 257–274; and Charles Burke Giles, "Benjamin Coleman: A Study of the Movement toward Reasonable Religion in the Seventeenth Century." PhD Diss., UCLA, 1963.
24. Adapted (supplying "the" for "ye") from The Manifesto Church, *Records of the Church in Brattle Square Boston with Lists of Communicants, Baptisms, Marriages, and Funerals 1699–1872* (Boston: The Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, 1902), 3. The text also appears in Samuel Kirkland Lothrop, *A History of the Church in Brattle Street, Boston* (Boston: W.H. Crosby and H.P. Nichols, 1851), 45–46.

25. See Norman Fiering, "The First American Enlightenment: Tillotson, Leverett, and Philosophical Anglicanism," *New England Quarterly* 54 (1981), 315, 320–321, 330.
26. Colman, *Government and Improvement of Mirth*, 37–38.
27. Colman, *Government and Improvement of Mirth*, 24–25.
28. In "To the Reader" (A4–A5, *Government and Improvement of Mirth*), Colman distinguishes between "Sober *Mirth*," which requires "Religious care" so that it does not turn to "*Filthiness, and foolish Talking*," and "*Spiritual Joy*," which is "the peculiar Duty and Priviledge of Saints." I understand the former to be the condition of the baptized (those under the watch of the church) and the latter to be the state of communicants who have saving faith.
29. Colman, *Government and Improvement of Mirth*, 22.
30. Colman, *Government and Improvement of Mirth*, 41.
31. Adam Potkay, *The Story of Joy: From the Bible to Late Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 77.
32. Colman, *Government and Improvement of Mirth*, 102, 111–115
33. Colman, *Government and Improvement of Mirth*, 115.
34. Quotations are from "*Personal Narrative*: An Electronic Edition," Early Americas Digital Archive: http://mith.umd.edu/eada/html/display.php?docs=edwards_personalnarrative.xml, accessed July 12, 2015. Original Source: *Jonathan Edwards: Representative Selections*, ed. Clarence H. Faust and Thomas H. Johnson (New York: American Book Company, 1935).

CHAPTER 5

A Pre-Millennial Portrait during the Revocation of the Massachusetts Charter

Linda M. Johnson

As concrete manifestations of culture, portraits express intangible ideas, shape personal identities, and reinforce cultural hierarchies. We can thus learn much about the individual and collective values of New England Puritanism by examining portraits of Puritan leaders – in this case, Increase Mather, whose portrait was painted by Dutch artist Jan van der Spriett in London during the negotiations to re-establish the liberties of the Massachusetts Charter (Figure 5.1). *Increase Mather* is a product of thought rather than a mere record of Mather's physical likeness.[1] It attempts to capture Mather's true essence, paradoxically depicting his self-promotion in embracing a high cultural aestheticism that was at odds with Puritan self-effacement.

Among other things, the portrait represents a profound change in emphasis regarding Mather's belief in the doctrine of predestination and offers new evidence in understanding his acquiescence to the demands of imperial sovereignty. *Increase Mather* reveals that Mather was certain of his election as a visible saint despite the tenets of predestination theology that deemed it impossible to document a reliable opinion about one's salvation, even though New Englanders established exhaustive accounts by which to measure one's personal progress.[2] Mather's certainty in his personal election explains his skill and confidence in negotiating with "royalty" as a key broker in aristocratic circles during the charter's negotiations. In a bold assertion portraying his preferences for European art and culture, Mather surrendered the provincialism of New England's neo-medieval "liney" tradition for the sophistication of Baroque classicism. This "painterly" continental high-style portraiture, crafted by the academically trained van der Spriett, who studied under the tutelage of Jan Verkolje in Delft, advances the sitter's sense of both salvational and political success.[3] Both men were influenced by the previous generation of

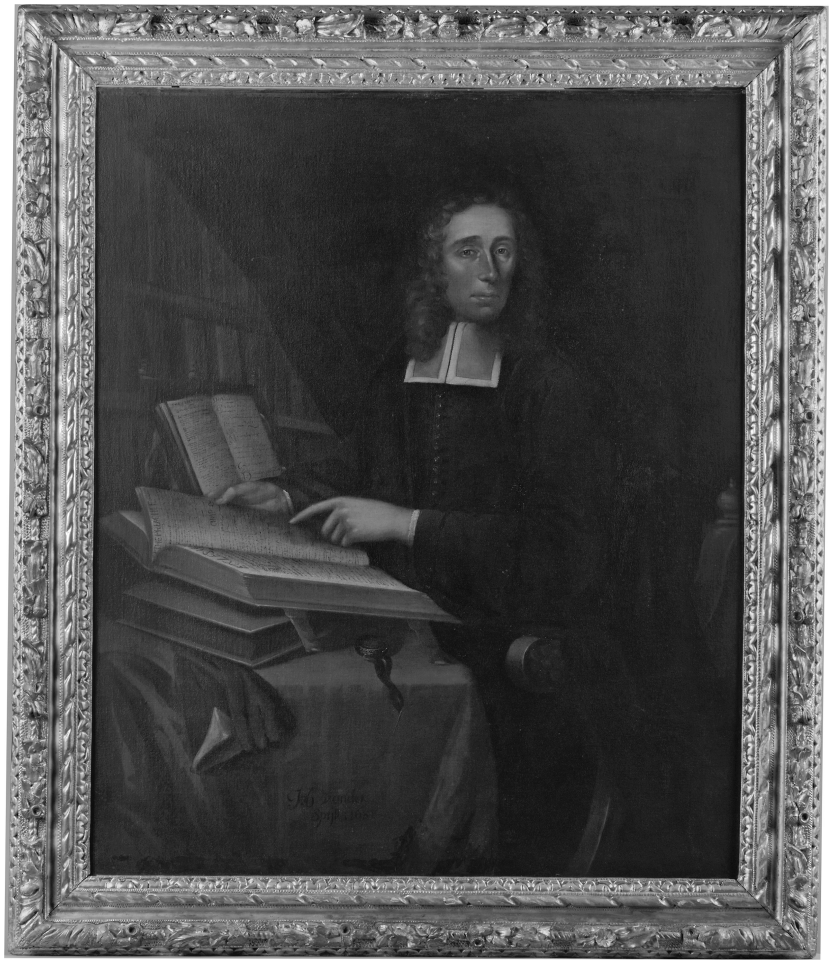


Figure 5.1 *Increase Mather*. Oil on canvas by John van der Spriett, 1688, 49 x 41 in.

Dutch portrait painters, notably Gabriel Metsu and Gerard ter Borch, who constructed images of nobility demanded by upper class leaders in the Hague court. Thus, Mather's portrait represents a refined idea of self-fashioning as an important barometer by which to assess his political skills in the light of his religious identity. The portrait achieves a harmony between Mather's spiritual and political self-assurance by demonstrating his receptiveness toward an aristocratic baroque sensibility understood to be symbiotic with theological orthodoxy.

In view of this interpretation, this chapter approaches Mather's image by way of formal art historical analysis.[4] Formally, the portrait's telling didactic coded iconography – so popular in Dutch and Flemish art practices – intensifies the artistic style of the Baroque that used exaggerated motion by way of the formal elements of color, line, shadow, and texture to produce drama, tension, and grandeur. The aristocracy saw these conventions as a means of impressing visitors and expressing triumph, power, and control. Mather's portrait is an image of contemplation embodying beliefs metonymically referenced not only in the style of his dress, posture, and gestures, but in the objects he deliberately chose to include in the sitting.[5] By looking at spatial and compositional elements, opposing visual metaphors, and the emblematic conventions that represent the different inner workings of his mind, we can discover an aesthetic complexity rich with theological meaning. The portrait is steeped in irony for his viewers, then and now, as it is heavily laden with Baroque motifs as well as scriptural text. But I am also interested in exploring the correlation between the stories of scripture that are the focal point of the painting and the context in which Mather had his portrait commissioned. Typologically, Mather's visual jeremiad is a deliberate call for repentance toward millennial expectation through the inspiration of the biblical King Solomon and the prophet Ezekiel. His journey toward visible sainthood owes a great deal to his belief in his personal inheritance of the Abrahamic covenant and his mystical union with Jesus Christ. As *imitatio Christi*, a term coined by Sacvan Bercovitch, Mather's portrait represents the theme of a New Testament anti-type embodying the nature of Christ through the depiction of Hebrew Scriptures and his understanding of New England's role in the broader context of salvation history.[6]

London

Arriving in London in 1688, Mather was aiming to return New England to the privileges established by the Massachusetts Charter recently revoked by the Restoration court of the Stuart monarchy. Initially created for missionary and commercial purposes to provide for remote self-governance in the early years of settlement, the Massachusetts Charter had afforded unprecedented administrative and political freedom to colonial government in property, trade, navigation, and the formation of separate churches and colleges.[7] The rescinding of this charter meant a new government controlled by royal power. Mather lobbied to re-establish land titles, maintain an autonomous elected assembly, and secure the governance of

Harvard College. In what would become four years of political deliberations among his London adversaries and other New England agents, Mather demonstrated a newly found political expertise as a shrewd arbitrator advocating for New England's interests. In many of the political tracts he published while in London, he argued for legislation that would ensure that New England would receive the same benefits provided to other corporate charters.[8] His rhetoric spoke more of liberty and property than of religion and divine providence.[9] While it is evident that Mather abandoned religious rhetoric in many of his anonymous tracts, it is telling that in his portrait Mather does not exemplify his role as a diplomatic ambassador. Nostalgic references to the original charter or writings of the first Founders, typically embodied in maps, seals, scrolls, pamphlets, or quills, are noticeably absent. They have been replaced by the wearing of liturgical vestments and the authority of scripture and sermon.[10]

Instead, the portrait depicts Mather's empowered status as a Puritan leader whose willingness to strengthen New England's condition (for this world and the New Jerusalem) would depend on his ability to associate himself with the aristocracy of London society. Already knowledgeable about popular artistic trends, Mather's correspondence with a wide range of non-conformists who had powerful ties to court culture exposed him to aristocratic social mores and artistic ideals that prepared him to seek favor in London.[11] Having been a key broker in the transatlantic exchange of ideas with his old friends since his original voyage to England in 1657, Mather adopted a strategy dependent on his popularity and reputation with artists, engravers, and the London press who knew of his political service and literary labors.[12] Embarrassed and frustrated by his own constituents' mob violence in the colonies, the lack of solidarity between colonial agents, and the transgressors of the New England "errand," Mather knew the glory of New England had waned.[13] In a clever assimilation of court and colony symbolic of the prophetic hope of Christ's second coming, Mather cooperated with van der Spriett to construct a carefully arranged "personal memoir" of spiritual victory that actively pushed forth his mission to advocate for New England's place within the cosmopolitan aesthetic and religious life of the Restoration court.

The Portrait

Increase Mather presents a middle-aged clergyman in apparent good health, positioned at a slightly diagonal turn at a table draped with red fabric. Poised, serene, and gracious, his penetrating gaze generates an unsettling

interaction creating a locked moment, an encounter of immediacy as a result of the darkened background and his proximity to the picture plane. His shoulder-length, dark, curly hair covers his ears and falls below his chin. He appears to be wearing a typical Puritan minister's dress: a civilian's three-piece suit consisting of a black, straight-bodied knee-length coat, a vest, and breeches. However, it is noteworthy that he dons a liturgical cassock and gown worn by Anglican clergy that is distinguished by the fullness of the coat's sleeves and the billowing cloak that cascades down from his shoulders and over the arm of his chair.[14] Two strips of bleached linen (known as fallen bands) "fall down" from his neck to mid-chest.[15] By this allusion to costume, van der Spriett portrays Mather's authority as a traditional religious leader.

Slightly elevated and resting on a wooden form, a large opened book is painted perpendicular to a smaller manuscript that is upright on a gothic-style lectern. Vaguely identifiable letters "THE ICHAB" are noted in a title on the top of the manuscript's left page (Figure 5.2). Indiscernible paragraph-type blocks of writing containing swirls of linear sentences are painted below. The manuscript can be identified as *Ichabod, or a Discourse Shewing what Cause there is to Fear that the Glory of the Lord, is Departing from New England*, a sermon widely believed to be one of Mather's most ominous discourses.[16] The fact that it was published later in 1701 as a result of the loss of Mather's Harvard presidency and the controversy with the Brattle Street Church is less significant to this essay than Mather's urgency to consult with van der Spriett to depict its earlier preparation. The choice of *Ichabod* begs a didactic and prophetic typological interpretation suggesting a crisis in Mather's personal eschatology as a result of the loss of the charter.[17]

Soon upon his arrival in London in late May, 1688, Mather moved to have his portrait completed. Immediately after meeting with van der Spriett, Mather planned a frontispiece to be copied by engraver Robert White for the international distribution of his publication (Figure 5.3a). Particularly cognizant of the vogue for authors' frontispieces as a common practice in the Atlantic book trade, Mather anticipated the increased sales his image would bring.[18] On July 3, 1688, Mather wrote into his diary about an appointment with both artist and engraver: "A.M.at Mr. Van der Spreats. P.M. with Robert White &c." And on July 5, he added, "At R. Whites, who drew my effigies &c."[19] Apparent acquaintances, van der Spriett and White collaborated with Mather to complete this commission quickly, by the first week of July. Both the portrait and the engraving would ultimately be the model for Boston engraver Thomas Emmes for the

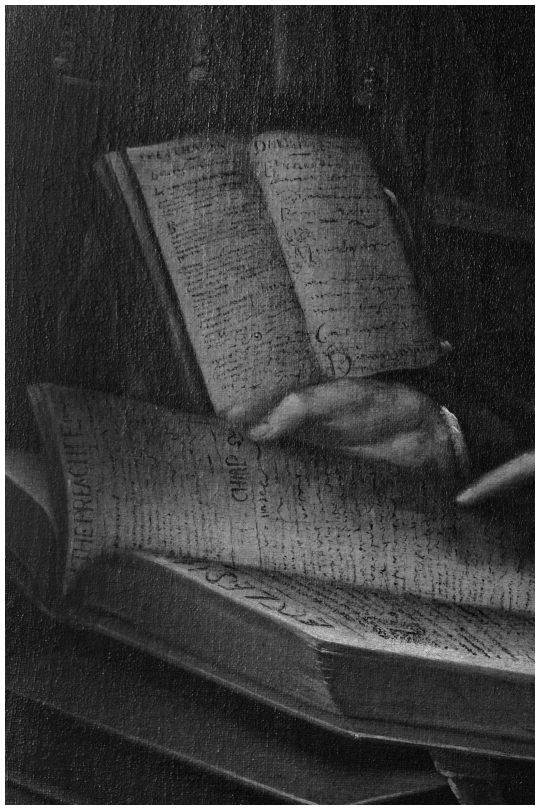


Figure 5.2 *Increase Mather*. Detail. Oil on canvas by John van der Spriett, 1688.

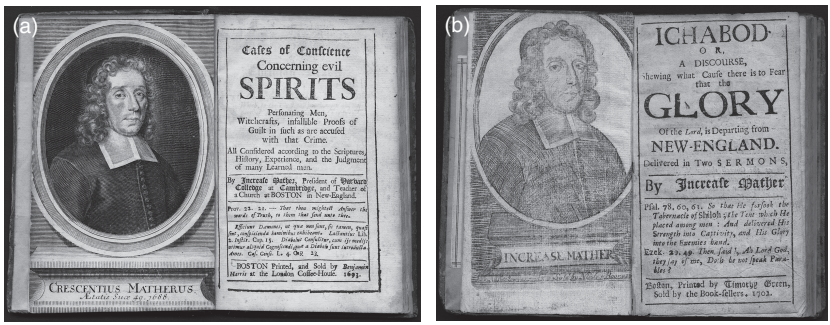


Figure 5.3 (a) *Increase Mather*. Engraving by Robert White, 1693, Frontispiece, *Cases of Conscience* (b) *Increase Mather*. Copperplate engraving by Thomas Emmes, 1702, Frontispiece, *Ichabod*.

first copperplate engraving in the American colonies (Figure 5.3b). Realizing his oil portrait would have a limited audience, Mather ensured through the transatlantic popularity of prints that his direct gaze would bear future witness to *Ichabod* in transatlantic publications.

The name Ichabod refers to a story in I Samuel 4:19–22 when the Ark of the Covenant was lost to Israel in a battle with the Philistines under the neglectful Aaronite priest, Eli.[20] The Ark was widely believed to be God's dwelling place in the Jerusalem temple, and its loss was shamefully memorialized in the name Ichabod, a name of disgrace given to Eli's grandson and translated to mean, "God's glory had left Israel." Mather's two-part sermon *Ichabod* parallels the structure of Ezekiel and develops the themes of punishment and abandonment when God threatens to leave the Ark. An implicit typology is established in Mather's sermon as he compares Ezekiel's prophecy on the final destruction of the Jerusalem wall, likening the loss of the Massachusetts Charter, the protective barricade of New England's autonomy to Israel's punishment.[21] In part two of *Ichabod*, he writes:

> Things look at this day, as if the Lord had purposed to Destroy our Wall.
>
> That Civil Charter Government, which God has favoured with, has been a Wall to the Churches. That Wall is at this day in great danger of being destroyed.
>
> And yet (which is an astonishing thing) we have done little or nothing to prevent it;
>
> As if we were under a Judicial dispensation of Heaven. Now if the Wall is removed, will not the Glory remove with it? What can we then expect, but that many Evils will soon break upon us like a Flood![22]

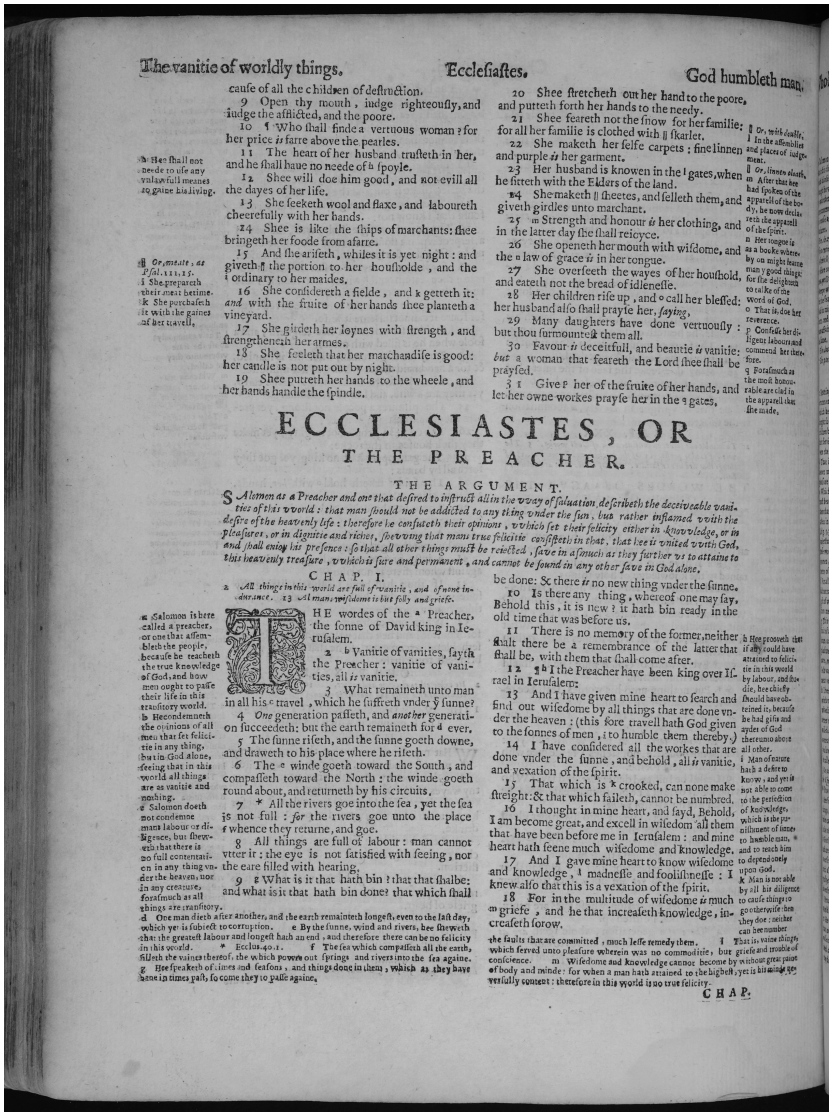
This reference to a symbolic wall destroyed by sin suggests a "rebuilding" of a new charter through active repentance, a hopeful response to those familiar with Ezekiel's prophecies. The portrait becomes an action metaphor for this rebuilding, embodied in the motion van der Spriett skillfully created in the natural movement of Mather's gestures, such as the spreading and pointing of his fingers, the twisting and turning of his body, and his direct gaze. In Baroque fashion, codified gestures are expected, and Mather's painted hand and head work in unity as a surrogate for speech, thereby transforming his image into an animated representation. The portrait is further enlivened by the recognized emblem of his pocket watch, which peeks out from under the lower left edge of the bookrest, keeping tempo with the rhythm of Ezekiel's urgency.[23] While linear time is of the essence in Mather's understanding of scriptural history, his offer of hope to New England acknowledges Ezekiel's faith in a patient yet

wrathful God who did not abandon the Israelites abruptly, but instead did so by "degrees," symbolically moving around the temple floor from threshold to gate before finally leaving through the eastern entrance (Ezek.11: 23).

Likewise in the portrait, the first words along the top of the sermon's right page are prominent characters inscribed in a heavy dark paint suggestive of the capital letters printed on the pages of Mather's published sermon: "O NEW-ENGLAND! NEW ENGLAND! Look to it, that the Glory be not removed from thee. For it begins to go. It has come to the Threshold of the House, if not to the East-gate."[24] Similarly, Mather viewed God leaving New England in stages, and tragically the loss of the charter would be the final portal. *Increase Mather* embodies and projects a number of Israel's failures onto Mather's Boston congregation as they prepared for divine judgments. Optimistically, however, Mather's active feature of pointing directs the viewers' eyes to certain pages of the tome in the center of the composition. The gesture offers hope that God's imminent departure could be prevented.

Propped up on a wooden stand, the book appears to be a Bible, notable by the explicit text painted across both of its pages. On the left page, the letters "Ecclesia" suggest an abbreviated title for the biblical book Ecclesiastes. Painted on the top of the right page are the words "The Preacher," a well-known reference to the thoughts of the narrator believed to be introducing the Ecclesiastes text. Cursive paragraphs painted below are further separated by the word CHAP, a common heading for the word *chapter*, which outlines each section in scripture. The pages displayed in the portrait are similar to those in the Breeches Bible, a gift given by John Cotton to his daughter Maria on her marriage to Increase in 1662 (Figure 5.4). While the two-column format typical of printed Bibles is not depicted, a strong case can be made for artistic license. Needing to depict this text as both scripture and Mather's personal manuscript, van der Spriett painted the scrollwork to demonstrate the fusion of spiritual and earthly matters in a telling synthesis of scripture with the common format of Puritan tracts typically divided into subheadings titled "Reasons," "Doctrines," and "Uses." This artful composition mirrors a typical apologetic brief written by his father-in-law, John Cotton, whose exposition on Ecclesiastes had profound influence on many of Mather's writings (Figure 5.5).

Through the gestural conventions of van der Spriett's brushwork, Mather "opens" scripture and performs the narratorial role of Ecclesiastes, effectively substituting the honor and wisdom of King Solomon, son of King David, in place of his disreputable colonial status



The vanitie of worldly things. Ecclesiastes. God humbleth man.

cause of all the children of destruction.
9 Open thy mouth, iudge righteously, and iudge the afflicted, and the poore.
10 ¶ Who shall finde a vertuous woman? for her price *is* farre above the pearles.
11 The heart of her husband trusteth in her, and he shall haue no neede of b spoyle.
12 Shee will doe him good, and not evill all the dayes of her life.
13 She seeketh wool and flaxe, and laboureth cheerefully with her hands.
14 Shee is like the ships of marchants: shee bringeth her foode from afarre.
15 And she ariseth, whiles it is yet night: and giveth ‖ the portion to her household, and the i ordinary to her maides.
16 She considereth a fielde, and k getteth it: *and* with the fruite of her hands shee planteth a vineyard.
17 She girdeth her loynes with strength, and strengthneth her armes.
18 She feeleth that her marchandise is good: her candle is not put out by night.
19 Shee putteth her hands to the wheele, and her hands handle the spindle.
20 Shee stretcheth out her hand to the poore, and putteth forth her hands to the needy.
21 She feareth not the snow for her familie: for all her familie is clothed with ‖ skarlet.
22 She maketh her selfe carpets: fine linnen and purple *is* her garment.
23 Her husband is known in the l gates, when he sitteth with the Elders of the land.
24 She maketh ‖ sheetes, and selleth them, and giveth girdles unto marchant.
25 m Strength and honour *is* her clothing, and in the latter day she shall reioyce.
26 She openeth her mouth with wisdome, and the n law of grace *is* in her tongue.
27 She overseeth the waves of her household, and eateth not the bread of idlenesse.
28 Her children rise up, and o call her blessed: her husband also *shall* prayse her, *saying*,
29 Many daughters have done vertuously: but thou surmountest ‖ them all.
30 Favour *is* deceitfull, and beautie *is* vanitie: *but* a woman that feareth the Lord shee shall be praysed.
31 Give p her of the fruite of her hands, and let her owne workes prayse her in the q gates.

a Shee shall not needs to use any vnlawfull meanes against her living.

‖ Or, meate, as Pſal. 111. 5.
i She prepareth their meat betime.
k She purchaseth it with the gaines of her travell.

l Or, linnen cloath.
m After that shee had spoken of the apparell of the body, she now deales with the apparell of the spirit.
n Her tongue is as a booke where by on might learne good things.
o That is, doe her reverence.
p Confesse her diligent labours and commend her therefore.
q Forasmuch as the most honourable are clad in the apparell that she vseth.

ECCLESIASTES, OR THE PREACHER.

THE ARGUMENT.

SAlomon as a Preacher and one that desired to instruct all in the way of salvation, describeth the deceiveable vanities of this world: that man should not be addicted to any thing vnder the sun, but rather inflamed with the desire of the heavenly life: therefore he confuteth their opinion, which set their felicity either in knowledge, or in pleasure, or in dignitie and riches, shewing that mans true felicitie consisteth in that, that he is vnited with God, and shall enioy his presence: so that all other things must be reiected, save in as much as they further vs to attaine to this heavenly treasure, which is sure and permanent, and cannot be found in any other save in God alone.

CHAP. I.

a *All things in this world are full of vanitie, and of more ignorance.* 13 *All mans wisdome is but folly and griefe.*

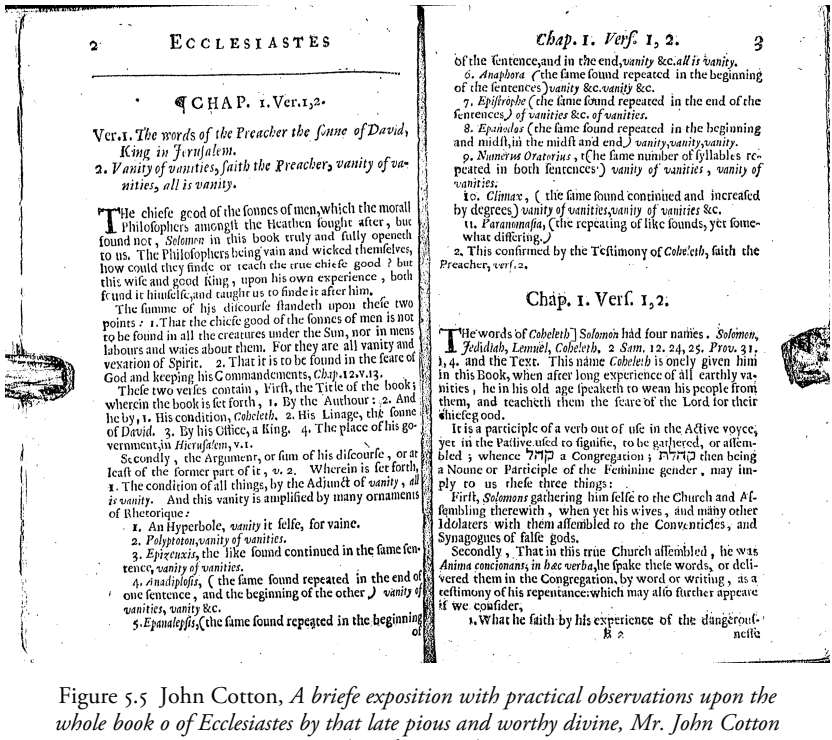
a Salomon is here called a preacher, or one that assembleth the people, because he teacheth the true knowledge of God, and how men ought to passe their life in this transitory world.
b Hee condemneth the opinions of all men, that set felicitie in any thing, but in God alone, seeing that in this world all things are as vanitie and nothing.
c Salomon doeth not condemne mans labour or diligence, but sheweth that there is no full contentation in any thing vnder the heaven, nor in any creature, forasmuch as all things are transitory.
d One man dieth after another, and the earth remaineth longest, even to the last day, which yet is subiect to corruption.
e By the sunne, wind and rivers, hee sheweth that the greatest labour and longest hath an end, and therefore there can be no felicity in his world.
* Eccles. 40. 1.
f The sea which compasseth all the earth, filleth the veines thereof, the which powre out springs and rivers into the sea againe.
g Hee speaketh of times and seasons, and things done in them, which as they have bene in times past, so come they to passe againe.

THE wordes of the a Preacher, the sonne of David king in Ierusalem.
2 b Vanitie of vanities, sayth the Preacher: vanitie of vanities, all *is* vanitie.
3 What remaineth unto man in all his c travel, which he suffereth vnder ỹ sunne?
4 *One* generation passeth, and *another* generation succeedeth: but the earth remaineth for d ever.
5 The sunne riseth, and the sunne goeth downe, and draweth to his place where he riseth.
6 The e winde goeth toward the South, and compasseth toward the North: the winde goeth round about, and returneth by his circuits.
7 * All the rivers goe into the sea, yet the sea is not full: *for* the rivers goe unto the place f whence they returne, and goe.
8 All things are full of labour: man cannot vtter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the eare filled with hearing.
9 g What is it that hath bin? that that shalbe: and what is it that hath bin done? that which shall be done: So there *is* no new thing vnder the sunne.
10 Is there any thing, whereof one may say, Behold this, it is new? it hath bin ready in the old time that was before us.
11 There is no memory of the former, neither shall there be a remembrance of the latter that shall be, with them that shall come after.
12 ¶ I the Preacher have been king over Israel in Ierusalem:
13 And I have given mine heart to search and find out wisedome by all things that are done vnder the heaven: (this sore travell hath God given to the sonnes of men, to humble them thereby.)
14 I have considered all the workes that are done vnder the sunne, and behold, all *is* vanitie, and vexation of the spirit.
15 That which is k crooked, can none make streight: & that which faileth, cannot be numbred.
16 I thought in mine heart, and sayd, Behold, I am become great, and excell in wisedom all them that have been before me in Ierusalem: and mine heart hath seene much wisedome and knowledge.
17 And I gave mine heart to know wisedome and knowledge, l madnesse and foolishnesse: I knew also that this is a vexation of the spirit.
18 For in the multitude of wisedome *is* much m griefe, and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorow.

h Hee proveth that if any could have attained to felicitie in this world by labour, and studie, hee chiefly should have obteined it, because he had gifts and ayders of God thereunto above all other.
i Man of nature hath a desire to know, and yet is not able to come to the perfection of knowledge, which is the pur-pose of him to humble man, * and to teach him to depend onely upon God.
k Man is not able by all his diligence to cause things to goe otherwise then they doe: neither can hee number
the faults that are committed, much lesse remedy them.
l That is, vaine things, which served unto pleasure wherein was no commoditie, but griefe and trouble of conscience.
m Wisedome and knowledge cannot become by without great paine of body and minde: for when a man hath attained to the highest yet is his minde ge-uersally content: therefore in this world is no true felicity.

CHAP.

Figure 5.4 *The Bible, that is, the Holy Scriptures conteined* [sic] *in the Olde and New Testament*. Page 1 of Ecclesiastes. Imprinted at London: by the Deputies of Christopher Barker, 1599.



2 ECCLESIASTES

¶ CHAP. 1. Ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 1. *The words of the Preacher the sonne of David, King in Jerusalem.*
2. *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*

THe chiefe good of the sonnes of men, which the morall Philosophers amongst the Heathen sought after, but found not, *Solomon* in this book truly and fully openeth to us. The Philosophers being vain and wicked themselves, how could they finde or teach the true chiefe good? but this wise and good King, upon his own experience, both found it himselfe, and taught us to finde it after him.

The summe of his discourse standeth upon these two points: 1. That the chiefe good of the sonnes of men is not to be found in all the creatures under the Sun, nor in mens labours and waies about them. For they are all vanity and vexation of Spirit. 2. That it is to be found in the feare of God and keeping his Commandements, *Chap.* 12. v. 13.

These two verses contain, First, the Title of the book; wherein the book is set forth, 1. By the Author: 2. And he by, 1. His condition, *Cobeleth.* 2. His Linage, the sonne of *David.* 3. By his Office, a King. 4. The place of his government, in *Hierusalem*, v. 1.

Secondly, the Argument, or sum of his discourse, or at least of the former part of it, v. 2. Wherein is set forth, 1. The condition of all things, by the Adiunct of *vanity*, *all is vanity.* And this vanity is amplified by many ornaments of Rhetorique:

1. An Hyperbole, *vanity* it selfe, for vaine.
2. *Polyptoton, vanity of vanities.*
3. *Epizeuxis*, the like sound continued in the same sentence, *vanity of vanities.*
4. *Anadiplosis*, (the same sound repeated in the end of one sentence, and the beginning of the other) *vanity of vanities, vanity* &c.
5. *Epanalepsis*, (the same sound repeated in the beginning of the sentence, and in the end, *vanity* &c. *all is vanity.*
6. *Anaphora* (the same sound repeated in the beginning of the sentences) *vanity* &c. *vanity* &c.
7. *Epistrophe* (the same sound repeated in the end of the sentences) *of vanities* &c. *of vanities.*
8. *Epanodos* (the same sound repeated in the beginning and midst, in the midst and end) *vanity, vanity, vanity.*
9. *Numerus Oratorius*, (the same number of syllables repeated in both sentences) *vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities.*
10. *Climax*, (the same sound continued and increased by degrees) *vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities* &c.
11. *Paranomasia*, (the repeating of like sounds, yet somewhat differing.)
2. This confirmed by the Testimony of *Cobeleth*, saith the Preacher, *vers.* 2.

Chap. 1. Vers. 1, 2.

THe words of *Cobeleth*] *Solomon* had four names. *Solomon, Jedidiah, Lemuel, Cobeleth.* 2 *Sam.* 12. 24, 25. *Prov.* 31. 1, 4. and the Text. This name *Cobeleth* is onely given him in this Book, when after long experience of all earthly vanities, he in his old age speaketh to wean his people from them, and teacheth them the feare of the Lord for their chiefe good.

It is a participle of a verb out of use in the Active voyce, yet in the Passive used to signifie, to be gathered, or assembled; whence קהל a Congregation; קהלת then being a Noune or Participle of the Feminine gender, may imply to us these three things:

First, *Solomons* gathering him selfe to the Church and Assembling therewith, when yet his wives, and many other Idolaters with them assembled to the Conventicles, and Synagogues of false gods.

Secondly, That in this true Church assembled, he was *Anima concionans, in hac verba*, he spake these words, or delivered them in the Congregation, by word or writing, as a testimony of his repentance: which may also further appeare if we consider,

1. What he saith by his experience of the dangerous-

Figure 5.5 John Cotton, *A briefe exposition with practical observations upon the whole book o of Ecclesiastes by that late pious and worthy divine, Mr. John Cotton* (London, 1654).

as New England's prodigal son. The sum of the text, "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanitie of vanities, all is vanity," is stated in Ecclesiastes 1:2, and repeated in 12:8; a verse that waxes and wanes about the uselessness of worldly life. The mood is pessimistic, no doubt a fitting portrayal of Mather's fear, melancholia, and sense of personal ineffectiveness in reinstalling the charter. Yet, given the high style of his portrait, it is ironic for his audience that in choosing this text Mather bemoans the "vanities" of this world. His choice of unrestrained elegance and refinement, hardly an exercise in futility, culminated in a magnificent composition that was heir to Baroque tradition famous for its luxurious aestheticism.[25] In his diary, Mather expresses his fine taste, as reflected in buying new clothes, boots, bands, and gloves for his portrait sitting.[26] Sweeping drapery and opulent textiles complete the sumptuous imagery. Mather, like most Puritans, agreed that fashion was necessary to set people apart, and he believed that dress revealed one's inward moral state.[27] Unconcerned about

accusations of vainglory, Mather's reveals his "kingship," the main point of this seemingly outward conceit.[28]

Van der Spriett brings the viewer's attention to a particular chapter in Ecclesiastes by painting Mather's right thumb near the symbol omega, the upper-case character for the twenty-fourth and last letter in the Greek alphabet. Mather's left index finger is depicted pointing to approximately the lower half of this page. Both painted gestures draw the viewer's eyes to the final chapter in Ecclesiastes and to the final verses that are known to be a summation of the text (12:8–12). Mather's intention is much like the "Preacher's": reminding us of the futility of vanity. He blurs the lines between himself and "The Preacher," asserting himself as a "type" to exemplify Solomon's wisdom in Ecclesiastes 12:9. We can imagine his fingers rising from the pages in a wise rebuke to his viewers "like the sharp sticks used by shepherds to guide their congregants (Eccl. 12:10–11).

The painstaking labor van der Spriett took to inscribe words on the Bible and the manuscript is curiously absent on the reddish bindings and gold decals of the books painted on the shelves flanking Mather. They are only partially revealed by the backdrop of green drapery drawn from right to left on a diagonal line. This seeming inattention to authorial detail may be an opportunity for Mather to subtly but deliberately champion only the words of scripture as a source of contemporary wisdom, rather than the vanity of too much knowledge gained through secular reading. Ecclesiastes 12:12 is an odd but fitting exhortation that resonated with Mather particularly during this period of biblical criticism. It reads: "And further, by those, my sonne, be admonished: of many books there is no end, and much study is a wearynesse of the flesh."[29] Similarly, John Cotton strongly cautioned against overzealous study in his exposition on Ecclesiastes 12:12, stating that too much reading "could break a man's wit."[30]

Having forged new friendships in London during the negotiations of the charter, Mather cultivated opportunities to increase his scientific knowledge and was the happy recipient of many books from political allies. Many of his friendships were manifested in the various social contexts of the King's court and leading Parliamentary figures. Self-described as the favorite of Queen Mary II, Mather felt confident enough to urge her to advocate on Massachusetts's behalf.[31] Most noteworthy was his relationship with chemist Robert Boyle, whose fashionable portrait by German painter Johann Kerseboom is strikingly similar (Figure 5.6). Perhaps Mather strove to achieve similar respect and recognition as Boyle, whose study of the interdependence between biblical scholarship and the empirical findings of the new sciences was revered by many.[32] The signifying absence of book



Figure 5.6 *Robert Boyle*. Oil on canvas after Johann Keresboom, c. 1689–1690, 50 x 40 ¾ in.

titles in the composition may be a direct visual missive to London's educated elite who found Mather's premillenialism quaint due to the discoveries of scientific inquiry.

Supported by the royal ancestry of Solomon, Mather's manufactured persona demands a return to the charter's core principles of duty and

obedience through Mosaic Law. In a threatening finale, he warns that judgment is at hand. The final verses in chapter twelve state, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Feare God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every worke into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."[33] Mather's choice of these biblical verses in this commission can hardly be over-emphasized when one considers the rarity of image-making. He explicitly points to the eternal words of King Solomon rather than the promises of King James II, who had incorporated New England in the Declaration of Indulgences, a transitory law suspending punitive regulations against dissenters.[34] At the time this portrait was painted, it was Mather's sole purpose for his covert journey across the ocean to extend gratitude to James for this small gesture of hope. King James's ordinances did not hold sway over the sanction of Ecclesiastes. In the context of his disappointment with the king and his frustration with New England's loss of autonomy, Mather managed his feelings of futility by using scriptural support, vicariously expressed through the Baroque drama of van der Spriett's hand. While it might seem unusual to use images as a way to understand Puritan theology, it was in doing away with the idolatry inherent in ecclesiastical patronage that the Reformation acted as a creative force in shaping an alternate aesthetic in art within post-reformation Europe and North America.[35] As the "The Preacher," *Increase Mather* transcends a mortal reality in a woeful camaraderie assuaged with the promises of scriptural fidelity despite the futility of "worldly vanities." Moreover, the portrait becomes the typological shadow for Mather's self-identification with Jesus Christ *as imitatio Christi*, a term Bercovitch described as "an attempt to obliterate what Puritan discourse termed 'the self' or the 'ego'."[36]

Imitatio Christi

Mather's self-representation suggests that his development as a leader in his Puritan community followed the redemptive pattern of Christ's life from vocation to service and the prospect of glory. Brimming with the confidence of the King of Judah, his portrait becomes a timely testimonial to Mather's belief in the messianic prophecies of scripture – prophecies especially important during a period of great tumult in the religious order. In keeping with his ministerial duty to "open" scripture through orderly reflection, Mather is represented in word and now in image as

Christ-like and so on a divinely directed mission, rather than as a mere colonial errand-boy seeking favors from his political masters.

Puritans such as Mather would face lifelong spiritual struggle and uncertainty in the symbolic themes of *dying and rising* like Christ on a pilgrimage toward death in which the hopeful penitent voluntarily surrendered to God's wrath or grace along the way.[37] In opposing sets of painting techniques such as vertical and horizontal composition, plays of light and dark color, diagonal lines, and hard and soft surfaces, as well as the position and content of conventional objects, the contrasting anxieties of the redemptive cycle, such as knowledge of sin, penance, mortification, and, ultimately, joy upon union with Christ, all find expression in van der Spriett's masterpiece.[38] Mather's surrender to the *dying* injunction of the redemption cycle may be a reflection on his own mortality embodied in the *memento mori* tradition of Northern Baroque portraiture.[39] As a commentary on his death, the portrait depicts an apocalyptic doom and the transient nature of all earthly goods and pursuits. Fearfully in *Ichabod* he wrote, "It is high Time for me to be thinking what my Last words, shall be."[40] Mather waxes prophetic as *imitatio Christi* by stating he is prepared to suffer: "I do not mean only Persecution by the wicked Pens & Tongues of me, in which you know that I have often had a singular share: But I expect that the dayes are approaching when Snares will be laid for my Life."[41] The finality of the omega symbol is a telling metaphor in the portrait for different types of endings. While present and future time were prevalent in Mather's political lobbying, it is the end of his own life and the fulfillment of God's plan for humanity – both major themes in Ecclesiastes and Ezekiel – that achieve emblematic status in this portrait.

The wooden armchair offers an opportunity to read Mather's life in a Christian context. The knob has a carved ornamental feature resembling a flower that curiously mimics a family seal known to be on his last will and testament.[42] Appearing armorial, this personal device is embellished with an arbor of individual flowers, each with five or six petals flanking a crescent-shaped moon. Just as the floriated seal encases Mather's will, so the floral arms of his chair encircle him in death as he opens what he believes might be his last sermon. The unobstructed space of the scarlet-clothed table beckons the viewer to enter into this narrative of *dying* and *rising*. Van der Spriett's choice of red tones throughout the portrait are symbolic of Christ's passion, suffusing the bookbindings on the shelves, the finials of the lectionary, and the ribbons curling in mid-air, as well as Mather's ruddy complexion. The Bible is supported on the red tablecloth, its pages lined in tones of crimson gold, emitting a rosy radiance onto the

floral wooden arm.[43] Brown gloves, ceremonial symbols of funerary apparel, overlap, thus resembling hands in prayer.[44] In effect, the floral termination of the chair arm becomes an extension of Mather's bountiful left arm and finger as he believes the verses he points to will bear fruit.

Van der Spriett's technique of light and shadow begins with Mather's illumined white forehead, directing viewers' eyes to the plays of light that descend diagonally from right to left of the composition, coursing downward through the divided white fallen bands and the pallid fingers of his left hand.[45] A shadowy darkness surrounds his closed lips, suggesting that no speech comes from him. Words are silently emitted from Ecclesiastes' rectangular pages that speak for Mather as they mirror his fallen bands painted proximally to his larynx. Divided in two by a dark line of paint, small white dots edge the opaque hemmed borders, giving the bands a glistening reflection, delineating them from Mather's black coat. Like the effigies on Puritan gravestones, Mather's head and bands appear as separate entities, a disembodied binary rising as if resurrected over the portrait's composition.[46] Mather's body, painted in draping black costume, blends into the voluminous folds of dark drapery behind him and absorbs the frequency of the incoming "light" of the scripture speaking for him.

The verticality of Mather's body, sermon, and library books generate an up/down interchange perpendicularly aligned to the horizontal position of the Bible, the table, and his hands, creating an intersection of expressive lines in a cruciform pattern. Aglow in red, Mather's table is transformed into an altar space where the sins of New England are redeemed in a christologically mystical composition. Peeking out from the sleeve of Mather's black garment is a painted white cuff of linen that joins Mather in a mystical marriage of the lamb and his bride as his left hand and index finger point to the center of this mystical cross. In christological union, Mather simultaneously projects his death and resurrection, protected from the collective "crucifixions" of royal control.

In a metaphorical leap, van der Spriett's use of formal elements evokes Solomon's citadel rather than the palaces of James II and William of Orange. Mather shines as *imitatio Christi* inside the rebuilt "wall" of a New Jerusalem temple rather than in the unfortified margins of Massachusetts Bay. This parallel is crucial to Mather's optimistic mindset, because the fulfillment of Hebrew Scriptures in Christ promoted hopeful ideas about personal redemption as well as the overall arc of history. Without a typological purview of divine royalty confirmed by the messianic prophecy of Christ's divinity, the hope for the resurrection of the saints

in a New Jerusalem was severely challenged. Any skepticism would compromise Mather's ability to withstand the anxieties about failing his constituents as a tenuous new charter was becoming inevitable.[47] Rather, through the construction of his visual language, the revelation Mather conveys becomes the light that comes out of the darkness in a period of puzzlement, fear, and bewilderment as New England transitioned from a plantation of religion to a plantation of trade.

Mather's Legacies

Mather's sense of his own dual roles as Christian pilgrim and spokesman for New England inspired this visual representation as a legacy to his belief in his election and his priestly role in the Parousia during a time of political loss, disenfranchisement, and ridicule. Rather than focus on his achievements and abilities in restoring the Provincial Charter, Mather, in unison with van der Spriett's stylistic knowledge of Baroque portraiture, constructed a complex representation of individual redemption and eschatological hope. The stylistic elements of the painting expand on the message of Ezekiel's anguish, effectively projecting similar rewards for obedience to New England's chosen few. Mather's millenarian portrait, thus adapted to the customs of court culture, was less a gesture of compromise than a strategic effort to use metropolitan artists and presses to establish political validation in London that could influence events in colonial America. In examining *Increase Mather*, we learn that Mather reasoned that knowledge of culture and art were not at odds with God's will, but were instead integral to renewing transatlantic Protestant ambition in the wake of New England's devalued status. His portrait is testimony that his intercessions proved fruitful in the final emendation of the new charter. As he stated, "great Priviledges are granted to the People in New England, and, in some Particulars, greater than they formerly enjoyed."[48]

In 1691, Mather's portrait was packed, crated, and placed on board the ship that would ultimately carry him home. The portrait would be hung high on the walls of his house as a reminder to himself and others of his esteemed role in extending the kingdom of God on earth. Lifting one's eyes up and above the earth's floor to view his portrait, *Increase Mather* rises high above the viewer's gaze. In a diary entry written many years earlier, he stated: "This day Cous. Coney with me, who with many Tears told me how much Hee was affected with ye sermon yesterday saying I seemed to him as if I were come fro Heav."[49] Interestingly, Cousin Coney was referring to Mather's Sabbath day sermon on Ecclesiastes.

Notes

1. Jules David Prown, *Art as Evidence: Writings on Art and Material Culture* (New London: Yale University Press, 2000), 69–91.
2. Edmund Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965). Romans 8, Authorized King James Version, a reprint of the edition of 1611. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 2005). (All biblical citations in this chapter refer to this edition.)
3. Alpers, Svetlana, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983). Wendy Katz, "Portraits and the Production of the Civil Self in Seventeenth Century Boston," Winterthur *Portfolio* 39 (2004), 124–160. Colonial Americans were painting in the "Tudor-like" tradition of limners, which was consistently criticized by Europeans as being too liney, flat, and old-fashioned, devoid of Renaissance principles. Verkolje and Spriett are mentioned in Dutch biographer Houbraken's "The Great Theatre of Dutch Painters" (1718–1721).
4. Prown, *Art as Evidence*: 69–91. Prown's methodology is a three-step format of interpretation: description, deduction, and speculation; the last utilizes critical theories such as psychoanalysis to examine portraits as a process of interpretative hypothesis.
5. Anne D'Alleva, *Look Again: Art History and Critical Theory* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2005), 88–120.
6. Sacvan Bercovitch, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 36.
7. Howard W. Preston, *Documents Illustrative of American History, 1606–1863* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1886), 36–61.
8. Jonathan Beecher Field, *Errands into the Metropolis* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2009). Mather's lobbying was dependent on similar strategies adopted by earlier colonial dissidents: physical presence in London, the flattery of the envoy, timing of controversial reports in an expanded print network, shifts in power, and colonial persecution. Increase Mather: *A Brief Account Concerning Several of the Agents of New England* (London, 1691), *A Brief Relation of the State of New England* (London, 1689), *A Narrative of the Miseries of New England* (London, 1688), *Reasons for the Confirmation of the Charters, Belonging to the Several Corporations in New England* (London, 1690–91), *A Vindication of New England From the Vile Aspersions Cast upon that Country* (London, 1688).
9. Michael G. Hall, *The Last American Puritan: The Life of Increase Mather 1639–1723* (Boston: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 216, 223–224, 240, 253.
10. Wayne Craven, *American Art: History and Culture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), 42–51. Examples of ministers and laymen who identified themselves with symbols of achievement: Wilhelm Van Der Vliet, *William Ames, 1633*. Oil on canvas, 27 in. x 22 in., Memorial Hall, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA; Unsigned, *John Cotton, c. 1649*. Oil on canvas, 33 in. x 26.1/2 in., Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.; Nathaniel Emmons,

The Council of Ministers, 1744. Oil on panel, 30 7/6 *in. x* 41 49/64 in., Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, MA; Self-portrait, *Thomas Smith, c.1680*. Oil on canvas, 24.1/2 in. x 23.3/4 in., Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, MA; Unsigned, *William Stoughton, c. 1700*, Oil on canvas, 50.2.1/4 in. x 42 in., University Hall, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

11. Francis Bremer, "Increase Mather's Friends; The Trans-Atlantic Congregational Network of the Seventeenth Century," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 94 (1984), 59–96.
12. Kenneth B. Murdock, *The Portraits of Increase Mather* (Cleveland, OH: Gwinn Mather, 1924).
13. Mason I. Lowance, Jr., and David Watters, "Increase Mather's New Jerusalem: Millennialism in Late Seventeenth-Century New England," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 87 (1977), 343–408. Reiner Smolinski, "Apocalyptism in Colonial North America," *The Encyclopedia of Apocalyptism*, 3 vols., ed. Bernard McGinn et al. (New York and London: Continuum, 1998), 3:49–54.
14. Janet Mayo, *A History of Ecclesiastical Dress* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1987), 77–88. If this is a vest rather than a buttoned coat, the combination of vest and full sleeve is also an odd representation, given Mather's vehement rejection of the Geneva gown after his Harvard graduation. The fiction of an unworn "preaching" or academic gown may suggest Mather is "preparing" a sermon.
15. Doriece Colle, *Collars, Stocks, and Cravats: A History and Costume Dating Guide to Civilian Men's Neckpieces 1655–1900* (Emmaus, PA: Rodale Press, 1972), 77–119.
16. Increase Mather, *Ichabod, or a Discourse Shewing what Cause there is to Fear that the Glory of the Lord, is Departing from New England* (Boston, 1702): Mather Family Papers, octavo, vol. 28, American Antiquarian Society.
17. Thomas M. Davis, 'The Traditions of Puritan Typology," in *Typology and Early American Literature*, ed. Sacvan Bercovitch (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1972), 12–45.
18. Wendy Wick Reaves, "Effigies Curiously Engraven: Eighteenth-Century American Portrait Prints," in *Prints of New England*, ed. Georgia Brady Barnhill (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1991).
19. Increase Mather, *Diary 3*, July 5, 1688. Mather Family Papers, Box 3, Folder 4, American Antiquarian Society.
20. I Samuel 4:19–22.
21. Ezekiel 9:3.
22. Mather, *Ichabod*, 80.
23. Chris H. Bailey, *Two Hundred Years of American Clocks and Watches* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1975), 15, 191.
24. Mather, *Ichabod*, 45–46.
25. Giovanni Careri, *Baroques* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).
26. Mather, *Diary*, May 16, 17, 23, and 24, 1688.

27. Increase Mather, "Burnings Bewailed" (Boston, 1711), in *Departing Glory: Eight Jeremiads*, ed. Lee Schweninger (New York: Scholar's Facsimiles and Reprints, 1986), 21–23. Martha L. Finch, *Dissenting Bodies: Corporealities in Early New England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 4.
28. Mary G. Winkler, "Calvin's Portrait: Representation, Image, or Icon?" in *Seeing Beyond the Word, Visual Arts in the Calvinist Tradition*, ed. Paul Corby Finney (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Erdmann, 1999).
29. Ecclesiastes 12:12.
30. John Cotton, *A briefe exposition with practical observations upon the whole book of Ecclesiastes by that late pious and worthy divine, Mr. John Cotton* (London, 1654).
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32. Jan W. Wojcik, *Robert Boyle and the Limits of Reason* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977).
33. Ecclesiastes 12:13–14.
34. Hall, *The Last American Puritan*, 209–211.
35. Ilja M. Veldman, "Protestantism and the Arts," in *Seeing Beyond the Word*, ed. Finney, 398–406.
36. Bercovitch, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self*, 2–6, 8–9. Increase Mather, *Mystery of Christ Opened and Applied* (Boston, 1686): Microfilm edition STC II r.571: 2 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan), 1975.
37. Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, *The Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 202–206.
38. Anne D'Alleva, *The Fundamentals of Art History* (Saddle River: Prentice Hall Inc., 2006), 27–36.
39. Hugh Honour and John Fleming, *The Visual Arts: A History* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2009), 416–506.
40. Mather, *Ichabod*, 90.
41. Mather, *Ichabod*, 91.
42. Increase Mather, *Last Will and Testament*, September 23, 1723. #4791, Suffolk County, Massachusetts Judicial Archives, Boston, MA.
43. Murdock, *Portraits of Increase Mather*, 59. Mather was often spelled as "Madder" in the seventeenth century. The flowers on his armchair may resemble the madder plant; an herb Increase was known to have grown, typically used as a red dye.
44. David E. Stannard, *The Puritan Way of Death: A Study in Religion, Culture and Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 122.
45. Prown, *Art as Evidence*, 46. Illumination of a minister's head with white paint was a convention to depict spiritual contemplation.
46. D'Alleva, *Look Again*, 133–134. Art formal analysis draws from Claude Levi-Strauss' research on binary oppositions. David H. Watters, "A Priest to the Temple," in *Puritan Gravestone Art*, ed. Peter Benes (Boston: Boston

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47. Increase Mather, "Arguments against relinquishing the Charter," The Hutchinson Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society Collection, 3rd Series, I 1825, 74–81.
48. Mather, *A Brief Account*, 15.
49. Increase Mather, *Diary* 12 April 1675 (March 1675 to December 1676), Together with extracts from another *Diary by Him 1674–1687*, ed. Dr. Samuel A. Green (Cambridge: Wilson and Son, December, 1899), Microfilm edition 1583 r.306 no.7 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan), 1975.

PART II

Puritanism's Others

CHAPTER 6

Imperial Translations: New World Missionary Linguistics, Indigenous Interpreters, and Universal Languages in the Early Modern Era

Allison Margaret Bigelow

Three coincident events of 1492 codified the essential interplay between language, religion, and empire in early modern Spain: the re-conquest of Granada, the center of Islamic empire in Spain; Columbus's Atlantic crossing; and the publication of Antonio de Nebrija's *Gramática de la lengua castellana* in Salamanca, the seat of Spanish humanism. Nebrija proclaimed in the dedication to Queen Isabela I, "que siempre la lengua fue compañera del imperio; y de tal manera lo siguió, que juntamente començaron, crecieron, y florecieron, y después junta fue la caida de entrambos" (language was always the companion of empire, and followed it in such a way that together they began, grew, and flourished, and then together was the fall of both).[1] With its alliterative flourish and triadic chronology of inception, growth, and maturity, the *Gramática*'s theory of language as imperial help-meet shaped early modern European approaches to the study of New World semiotic systems.[2] But missionaries who learned from indigenous Americans put pressure on Nebrija's ideas. As Roger Williams and John Eliot studied Algonquian in Massachusetts, and Bernardino de Sahagún and Gaspar González de Nájera learned Nahuatl and Yucatec Maya, Protestant and Catholic missionaries throughout the Americas both served and challenged the empires that supported them.

When they shared data from America with correspondents in Europe, missionary linguists became part of a web of reformers who hoped that universal grammars might restore Earth to its pre-Babelian state. Williams and Eliot have often been read as "Separatists among Separatists."[3] By following new approaches in hemispheric and transatlantic studies of colonial language encounters,[4] we see Puritan missionaries as central agents within the history of American missionization and the translation of empire (*translatio imperii*), a Renaissance commonplace that analogized

the westward march of empire to the course of the sun, thus naturalizing the "progress" of European empires. This chapter will first outline key elements of early modern linguistics – namely, how writers in the Americas, England, and Europe understood the relationship between language, mind, and spirit, and how such understandings cohered with dominant scientific paradigms. Then, it will show how evidence from missionary linguistics both supported the extension of European empires and challenged some of their most central theories of language. Texts from British and Iberian America reveal similarity and difference between and among missionary linguists: where Eliot and Williams disagree on language as an evidentiary category in disputes over Native American origins and land claims, and where Puritans and Catholics accommodate to indigenous linguistic structures, beliefs, and practices to generate doctrinal materials. This comparative inquiry shows the diversity and complexity of missionary linguistics in the early Americas. While Puritan and Catholic theologies and conversion efforts differed in important ways, when viewed from the perspective of missionary language learners and their indigenous instructors in the New World, the practices of linguistic accommodation that aided in the work of spiritual conversion and contributed to early modern theories of universal communication appear more similar than different.

Sound, Signs, and Spirit: Language and Universal Communications

Colonial writers such as Jesuit priest José de Acosta conceived language to be an immediate revelation of thought ("señales inmediatamente de los conceptos y pensamientos de los hombres"); his first-hand experience and correspondence with missionaries in the Atlantic and Pacific worlds allowed him to compare how speakers of different languages conveyed their knowledges in written and spoken forms.[5] Acosta marveled at the range of meanings signified by small strokes in East Asian characters, and he praised their sophistication relative to indigenous American writing systems, which brimmed with "muchas cosas dignas de consideracion" (many things worthy of consideration), but lacked the wit ("curiosidad") and delicacy of Chinese and Japanese writing (407). He looked most favorably on texts that could speak to Christian converts, such as Mayan glyphs that became catechisms, Nahua paintings that represented the Paternoster and Ave Maria, and Andean *quipus* that were repurposed into confessionals (407–412). Indigenous intellectuals, such as

painter-writers of New Spain (*tlacuilos*) and quipu readers of the Andes (*quipocamayos*), were central to Acosta's belief that New World knowledges could be faithfully translated into missionary materials.

By affirming the abilities of indigenous translators, Acosta concluded that Native American writing systems had greater potential to generate and convey spiritual truths than East Asian letters: "sabe mas un Indio del Piru, o de Mexico, que ha aprendido a leer y escreuir, que el mas sabio Mandarin dellos" (an Indian from Peru or Mexico who has learned to read and write knows more than the wisest of China; 408). Despite the aesthetic complexity of Chinese characters, they proved to be literacy "without substance," because "sciencias mas altas no las alcançan, y el mismo escreuir y leer no es verdadero escreuir y leer, pues no son letras las suyas que siruan para palabras" (they do not reach higher sciences, and their way of reading and writing is not the true reading and writing, because their letters do not make words; 406). In sum, Acosta believed that true knowledge of reading and writing was the best way for converts in East Asia and America to partake in what Puritan poet John Milton called the "sciential sap" of God's wisdom,[6] and that the formal beauty of visual writing systems was not as important as their ability to convey deeper spiritual truths. As missionaries studied indigenous languages and letters to understand the cultures of the New World and convert its people, they developed their own ways of thinking about language, civilization, and spiritual exchange.

Some writers used language as a way to read communities who lived, as Samuel de Champlain put it, "without faith, without law, with no knowledge of the true God."[7] In Brazil, Ambrósio Fernandes Brandão argued that the lack of faith, law, and religion among the Tupi people was written into their language, which lacked the letters F, L, and R, "em signal de que não tem fé, lei nem rei" (signaling that they have neither Faith, Law, nor Rex). Perhaps taking literally the text of Galatians 5:15 ("if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another"), Brandão used this linguistic evidence to explain why Tupi people practiced cannibalism ("comem carne humana") and were all inclined to war, tearing asunder one people ("nação") from another. [8] He was not alone in reading sounds and letters as signs of civilization or barbarity. As we saw with Acosta, many early moderns believed that language indexed thought; as Eliot put it pithily, "*Grammar* goeth in concatenation with Logick: for there is a *Reason* of *Grammar*."[9]

For such thinkers, the relationship of language to reason was a profound matter of the spirit. Thus, Puritan minister Samuel Whiting, writing from

the Shawsheen tract, which English settlers divided and rechristened as Billerica, explained "true literacy" in spiritual terms. "We know no more than we do," Whiting affirms in his prefatory address to Readers, for

> The life of *Reading*, is in the *performance* of our duty of what we learn. *Words* are but *empty sounds*, except we drawn them forth in our lives. *Printed books* will do *little good*, except God's Spirit print them in our lives. *Gods words* written with Ink will not profit, except they be also written with the *Spirit of the Living God*.[10]

Citing John 13:17 and Psalm 110:10 ("They are the blessed ones that *know and* do"; "good understanding have all they that do his Commandments"), Whiting insists that knowledge acquires its full meaning only when printed literacy is routed through the spirit and infused with grace. He further distinguishes between Christian "understanding" and empty "Brain-knowledge" – the former marked by coupling right thought to good practice, and the latter as temporary and untenable as a full bladder. "As for *Brain-knowledge*, it may *puff a man up*, and bring him down low to destruction; it may *raise him high*, that he may have the deeper fall into Hell; it may *swell him like a bladder*, and when the bladder breaks, then like an unskillful Swimmer, he drowns" (n.p. [A4]).

By placing Acosta, Brandão, and Champlain alongside Eliot and Whiting, I do not mean to equate Protestant and Catholic ideas about the Word. Rather, these examples suggest that in missionary literatures from Latin America's *reducciones* (grid-like settlements for indigenous converts, arranged around a central plaza and church) and New England's towns of "Praying Indians," new understandings of languages and letters blurred otherwise stark differences between Protestant and Catholic theologies.[11] Although missionaries were key agents in overseas imperial administration, their colonial linguistic ecumenicalism also put pressure on theological definitions that separated Christian thinkers, church leaders, and monarchs in Europe.[12] There, religious institutions had been largely responsible "for sorting people into migration streams" in the Americas, with Catholic colonists settling in certain provinces, and Protestants in others, but these institutional frameworks quickly broke down in the New World, resulting in what Carla Gardina Pestana calls a "multiplicity of religious faiths and practices . . . at the margins."[13]

Even profoundly different theological doctrines about images and words become blurred when viewed from the perspective of the syncretic practices of indigenous converts in the Americas. As Pestana goes on to argue, seventeenth-century believers who incorporated pages from Eliot's

Algonquian-language Bible in their funerary rites would not have done so solely out of reverence for alphabetic literacy, but also because they had traditionally interred objects to accompany the dead and signal their status to spiritual forces who animated the afterlife (91–95). In this way, indigenous understandings of doctrinal materials in Puritan New England resembled the transculturated practices of Catholic missionaries in New France and Latin America; the book was central to Puritan conversion, and indigenous converts read it in their own terms.[14]

At the same time, missionaries' linguistic accommodations of New World knowledges also integrated them into transatlantic networks of language reformers – especially those who believed in the irenicist possibility of universal communication. In the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries, Renaissance scientists like Giordano Bruno, Walter Warner, and Francis Bacon studied the "memorative arts" (*ars memoria*) of classical natural philosophy and medieval alchemy. As Paolo Rossi argues convincingly, they aimed to devise universal signifying systems that used occult ways of knowing – including emblematics, cryptography, and mnemotechnics – to better remember and combine ideas, ultimately leading to the perfect communication of divine, scientific truth.[15]

Informed by these earlier approaches, and urged on by near-constant warfare in England and Europe, by the mid-seventeenth century some language reformers sought alternative models of universal language. They collaborated with New World missionaries to develop grammars that would allow all of God's children to communicate with each other. Although some scholars argue that seventeenth-century universal language schemes were primarily "an English phenomenon" because "the most significant developments occurred in an English setting,"[16] this view overlooks the contributions of missionaries throughout the world, and indigenous informants who shared and shaped their ideas. For example, globally oriented reformers such as Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz integrated data from Asia, Africa, and America to design new forms of universal communication, including grammars, a dictionary of words common to the world's languages, and a character-based script that enabled universal transmissions of scientific knowledge (*characteristica universalis*). Leibniz synthesized information from Jesuit reports from China, whose terms for mares [*morah*] he traced to Germanic and Anglo-Saxon roots; catechisms from Virginia and New England, as translated by newly formed Swedish institutes; and collections of linguistic reports from Africa, "which contains in its boundaries more nations and languages than in other parts of the world."[17]

Along with languages and pictographic writing systems from the New World and the Old, Leibniz's *Dissertatio de arte combinatoria* (Leipzig, 1666) incorporated mathematical principles and musical scales to categorize human knowledge systems – including theology. His ecumenical design for a universal language was motivated by a search for harmony, what he called the "true freedom" that would animate a world liberated from faction.[18] Like other language reformers, Leibniz developed his theories about time, the soul, free will, and metaphysics with Protestant writers in Germany and England, including Hiob Ludolf and Samuel Clarke, who served as Isaac Newton's pastor. In letters that were later published in facing pages of italics (French) and Roman type (English), Leibniz and Clarke argued over Newton's sensory vocabulary (the soul's "particular Place, which is the *Sensorium*"), their own definitions of miracles ("The nature of a Miracle does not at all consist in *Usualness* or *Unusualness*; For then *Monsters* would be *Miracles*"), and "the *Signification of the Words*" in "*Mathematical* Reasonings" that "may be applyed to *Physical* and *Metaphysical* Subjects" (or not, as the French version stated: "*mais cela n'empêchera pas qu' on ne puisse appliquer les Raissonemens* Mathematiques *à des Sujets* Physiques & Metaphysiques").[19] Even when they disagreed, by identifying correspondences in sacred tongues, Native American languages, mathematics, music, and metaphysics, Leibniz and his correspondents aligned themselves with early modern scientific paradigms that followed the analogical thinking of Aristotelian natural philosophy and Empedoclean root theory.[20] As Renaissance writers recuperated sources from antiquity, the emerging science of linguistics informed the translation of pagan natural knowledge and became a key site for the reconciliation of Christian and non-Christian logic.[21]

Across the Channel, Protestant projectors in England had similarly ecumenical habits of mind; their debates suggest that language was central to the matter of spirit. By reverting to a pure language or by inventing a new one that would restore language to its prelapsarian purity, reformers believed that they could fulfill millenarian prophecy. Most Protestant thinkers envisioned heaven as the seat of this Fifth Monarchy, while some equated New England with the New Jerusalem.[22] After fleeing his native Poland to escape its protracted war with Sweden, Samuel Hartlib took residence in London. There, under the umbrella of "pansophism," a branch of moral philosophy that integrated scientific knowledge and responsible governance into a way of being in the world, Hartlib established one of the most wide-ranging and important networks of reformers in the early modern Atlantic world.[23]

Many of his correspondents, including Leibniz and Francis Lodwick – the latter owning copies of Williams's *Key into the Language of America* (London, 1643) and a French translation of El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega's *Comentarios reales* (Paris, 1633 [Lisboa, 1609])[24] – identified universal communication as a key to the restoration of Adamic empire. Although the Hartlib circle was once dismissed as a "fringe" segment of Protestant thought and English politics, new research shows that it played an important role in the formation of religious and scientific networks and modes of information gathering and dissemination that were central to the extension of English empire, and that pansophism's particular strain of Protestant alchemy influenced the colonial designs of John Winthrop, Jr.[25]

But the problem of sound remained a barrier on the way to the New Jerusalem, as Brandão had suggested in Brazil, and as the Dutch-speaking Lodwick learned during his residence in England. He believed that the "corrupt custom of sounding of the present carracters so differently by severall nation," as when the letter "c" was variously "sounded as a k. or s," prevented the sharing of universal truths, because speakers of one language could not understand ideas that were conveyed with other accents. Thus, a "universal alphabet" that was free of letters and sounds would allow for perfect communication "both in writing and printing," as Lodwick explained in a draft of the book that he later published as *Common Writing* (London, 1646).[26] Combining personal experience as an immigrant in England, and secondary reports on America, Lodwick devised "a kind of hieroglyphical representation of words" that rendered all world languages mutually intelligible, because it "hath no reference to letters, or their Conjunctions in words."[27] While missionary writers in Asia and the Americas praised and criticized potential converts who "wrote without words,"[28] whether in characters, glyphs, or knotted cords, some Protestant proponents of universal languages celebrated the millenarian possibilities of graphic writing systems precisely because their visual elements eliminated the problem of sound.

Lodwick connected his thoughts on sound to the rules of language more explicitly in his second edition, *The Ground-Work or Foundation Laid, (or so intended) For the Framing of a New Perfect Language: And an Universall or Common Writing* (London, 1652). Here, he attempts to clarify exactly how three "radixes," or word roots of action (verbs), quality (nouns), and help (adjectives and adverbs) that borrowed syntactically from Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and German, could be translated into universal "representations of things" with shared "gates to Sciences."[29]

However, a closer look at Lockwick's "universal" language and writing system reveals deeply local ideas. For example, his ideograms reduced terms for emperors, kings, earls, and "states of the united provinces" to one character, "derived from the Radix to rule," that, when joined to the name of the region, "will sufficiently distinguish the respect of superiority in honour among themselves" (*Common Writing*, 11). Lodwick's "universal" writing articulates a specific view of political authority – one that elides distinctions of state systems and royal genealogies. At the same time, Lodwick retains a gendered marking system, what he called "a subspecificall distinction to be made between the male and the female" that had all but disappeared from seventeenth-century English, which used animacy rather than gender to mark verbs and nouns. (Eliot noted that in this respect, early modern English was like Algonquian languages.[30]) Lodwick's insistence that "the female *sub specie*, is to have a distinctionall addition" shows how his "universal language" conveyed ideas about gender that reflected larger cultural debates and discursive practices in England (*Common Writing*, 12). Perhaps the only thing we can say is that Lodwick's pictographic system would have relieved the need for extra letterblocks of "O" and "K" in Eliot's Algonquian-language Bible,[31] in which the Puritan missionary observed, "we have more frequent use of [o *and* oo] then other Languages have" (2).

To appreciate why universal language theorists both incorporated and rejected elements of non-European languages, from pictographic writing systems to linguistic gender, we need to understand how missionary linguists accommodated indigenous languages to evangelization campaigns throughout the colonial Americas. Missionary linguistic literatures – Catholic and Protestant, Atlantic and Pacific – are richly diverse.[32] Some writers confirmed beliefs that undergirded imperial expansion, such as Eliot's contributions to debates about the Hebraic origins of indigenous people, and the fulfilling revelation that Christian conversion would thus offer, while others challenged the logic of the *translatio imperii*, like Williams's marshaling of linguistic evidence to affirm indigenous people's land rights.

New World Accommodations of Renaissance Christianity

Norfolk minister Thomas Thorowgood's *Jews in America, Or, Probabilities that Americans are of that Race* (London, 1650) was a cornerstone in the transatlantic polemic about Native American origins. Supported by a sixteen-page introductory letter from Hartlib circle correspondent John

Dury, sent on January 27, 1650, Thorowgood glossed "observations from Printed Books" like Acosta's *Historia natural y moral* and Girolamo Benzoni's *Historia del mondo nuovo* (Venetia, 1565), as well as exchanges of "written Letters, and by Discourse" with experienced travelers to prove "that the Westerne Indians be of Jewish race."[33] These arguments resonated with Puritan reformers, including Norfolk-based Thomas Allen and Massachusetts-based John Eliot, who learned of Dury's work as well as that of Manoel Dias Soeiro (Menassah ben Israel), through Edward Winslow.[34] According to Eliot, his reading of a manuscript copy of *Jews in America* inspired the Lord to move him to inquiry and action. He began tracking the footprints of Algonquian languages through the Book of Nature, collecting, à la Ezekial, "those dry and scattered bones" and "scattered dust of the dead bodies of men," as he explained to Thorowgood in a letter of March 18, 1653. From his readings of Genesis and Sir Walter Raleigh's *History of the World*, as well as first-hand experience in "our Indian language," Eliot concluded that "the first planters of *America*, to be not only of *Sem, but Ebrewes of Eber*."[35]

When Thorowgood published Eliot's long letter in his second edition of *Jews in America* (London, 1660), he completed a closed feedback loop. Thorowgood motivated Eliot to study "the confusion of languages" formed by "that bone of discontent, and division of heart about dividing the empty earth" (10, 13). Then, he cited "The learned Conjectures of Reverend Mr. John Eliot touching the Americans" and their conversion to justify the "Title of the English to those Plantations."[36] In embodied terms of dry bones and full hearts, Eliot and Thorowgood used linguistic diversity, documented by the spread of language groups throughout "the empty earth," as authorizing evidence for English settlement in ancestral lands of indigenous communities – which were certainly not empty. Missionary instruction among descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel, in other words, legitimated the "Title of the English" in Massachusetts, and the man who sent Eliot to America used Eliot's words to confirm his original hypothesis.

Only much later, and upon closer study of the Algonquian language, would Eliot temper his belief in the Hebraic origins of New World peoples. While in the 1650s Eliot zealously celebrated the millenarian possibility of converting the Lost Tribes of Israel, over time he became "less certain" and more in line with the findings of missionaries and priests in Latin America, who had long since "become convinced that any resemblances between indigenous ceremonial practices and those of Judaism were deceptions by the devil rather than the acting out of vague ancestral memories of distant Hebrew rites."[37] In 1671, Eliot prefaced his *Indian Dialogues* by asking

English colonists to respect the sovereignty of Native lands and the sanctity of conversion and conservation: "That in all your respective Colonies you would take care that due Accommodation of Lands and Waters may be allowed them, whereon Townships and Churches may be (in after-Ages) able to subsist; and suffer not the English to strip them of all their Lands, in places fit for the Sustenance of the life of man."[38]

For his part, even in the middle of the century, Roger Williams disagreed completely with Eliot's belief in English claims to an "empty earth." He found linguistic evidence that showed how Algonquian-speaking communities understood land ownership and distribution. The *Key into the Language of America*, a phrasebook or "help to the *Language* of the *Natives* in that part of America, called *New-England*," was organized like a natural history that documented marriage customs and family structure (chapters 5–6, 23), climate (13–14), flora and fauna (15–19), religion (21), politics (22), currency (24), and commerce (25–26). In a chapter on natural bounty, Williams argued that

> the *Natives* are very exact and punctuall in the bounds of their Lands, belonging to this or that Prince or People, (even to a River, Brooke) &c. And I have knowne them make bargaine and sale amongst themselves for a small piece, or quantity of Ground: notwithstanding a sinfull opinion amongst many that Christians have right to *Heathens* Lands: but of the delusion of that phrase, I have spoke in a discourse concerning the *Indians* Conversion.[39]

To correct misguided English concepts about Native lands and religious redemption, Williams produces an interesting evidentiary form – a vocabulary list. The list begins by distinguishing the words "Aúke & Sanaukamuck" ("*Earth or Land*") and "Níttauke Nissawâwkamuck" ("*My Land*"). The demonstrative pronoun, "nit" (*níit*), was prefixed to the root "auke" and combined with the pluralizer "nis" to force phonological accommodation at the nasalized "a" (â) after the fricative "s" sound.[40] By documenting morphosyntactic changes between land that is possessed ("*My Land*") and land that exists as a nominal category ("*Earth or Land*"), Williams converts Algonquian language into evidentiary proof. In Williams's hands, language became the archive that documented how Native communities organized their own systems of land distribution, and why no Christian could claim the space.[41]

Although Eliot and Williams use linguistic evidence in different ways – one that reinforces the claims of English title of Native lands, another that challenges the legitimacy of such colonial designs – both missionaries agree

that small-scale shifts in sounds and syntax indexed larger debates about social practices and spiritual change. After its dedication to Robert Boyle, Fellow of the Royal Soceity and patron of Indian schools in Tidewater Virginia, Eliot's *Indian Grammar Begun* (London, 1666) united linguistic and religious conversion under a shared paradigm of change. Eliot began with words that were made flesh, declaring in the opening pages that "I have made an *Essay* into this difficult service and laid together some Bones and Ribs . . . not worth the name of a *Grammar*," while the body of the text revealed how that flesh became word: "That a Christian must be adorned with as many Adverbs as Adjectives . . . When a man's virtuous Actions are well adorned with *Adverbs*, every one will conclude that the man is well adorned with virtuous *Adjectives*" (A2 v, 7). Having connected parts of speech to Christian life, Eliot explained how to convert nouns into verbs in Algonquian: Nouns that end in *–onk*, what Ives Goddard and Katie Bragdon gloss as "and" or "than," "turn back into *Verbs*," "*many words* are made *Verb Substantive*," and "All *Virtues* and *Vices* (so far as at present I discern) are *Verbals*, from their *activity* and *readiness* to turn into *Verbs*" (13, 15, 10).[42] As an example of this process, Eliot shows how verbal expressions of identity ("Noowompes, *I am white*" and "Koowompes, *Thou art White*") become non-count nouns ("Noowompesuonk, *My whiteness*" and "Koowomnesuonk, *Thy whiteness*") when "onk" is added in the word-final position (20).

After showing the grammatical interchangeability of "being white" and "whiteness," Eliot goes on to argue that various features of the Algonquian language facilitate Christian conversion. One clear example that he presents is "the instead form," a mode of conjugation whose suffixes show when one person "acteth in the *room* or *stead* of another" (18). Like other linguistic features that were new "to us that know the *European* or Western Languages," Eliot organizes Algonquian grammar into something intelligible to his readers – a verb chart (11). He explains to his readers that this mode "is of great use in *Theologie*, to express what Christ *hath done for us: as*

> Nunnuppoowonuk, He died for me.
> Kenuppoowonuk, He died for thee.
> Kenuppoowonukqun, He died for us.
> Kenuppoowonukoo, He died for you. &" (18)

By translating indigenous expressions into discursive and religious forms that were familiar to language learners in Europe, from verb charts to expressions of Christ's sacrifice, Eliot guides his readers to see how the Algonquian language readies the path of conversion in America.

Yet the person most changed by the experience of language learning is Eliot himself, who came to Algonquian through the instruction of "a pregnant witted young man, who had been a *Servant in an English house*" (66). The intimacies of language experience, and his personal relationship to his teacher, are bound up in Eliot's uneasy handling of universal spirit and linguistic particulars.[43] At times Eliot universalizes Algonquian grammar, as when he notes how nouns lack linguistic gender "as in other Learned Languages," and when he finds that conjugations are "more like to the *Hebrew*" (8). At other times he insists upon the grounded particularities of sounds articulated by "We *Massachusetts*" who "pronounce the *n*," unlike the Nipmuk, who use "l," and Abenaki tribes, who inflect the "r" (18, 2). Beyond language, Eliot's polysemious pronouns hint at larger questions of identity and affinity: sometimes "us" refers to a universal body of believers ("what *Christ* hath done for us," "in our English books"); sometimes "we" are particular indigenous language groups ("We *Massachusetts*," "our *Alphabet* is the same with the *English*"); and sometimes the same pronoun refers to both groups in a single sentence: "We have no *compleat distinct word* for the *Verb Substantive*, as other *Learned Languages*, and our *English Tongue* have, but it is under a *regular composition*, whereby *many words* are made *Verb Substantive*" (15). These ambiguities reveal how missionary linguists moved between universalizing and localized forms of knowledge, doctrine, and language, and how experience with indigenous interpreters influenced missionary identities.

The same was as true in Latin America as it was in British America. As part of evangelizing efforts in Spanish America, priests from diverse Jesuit, Franciscan, and Dominican orders developed indigenous-language catechetical and liturgical materials that reveal a range of aesthetic, lexical, and doctrinal accommodations.[44] Working from the Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco to produce a hymnal that could replace ancestral Nahua songs with Christian chants, so that "no canten jamas los cantares antiguos, sino solamente los de Dios, y de sus sanctos" (they would no longer sing the old songs, but only those about God and His saints), Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún adopted Nahuatl hymns to the celebration of Christian liturgy.[45] In the calendric and poetic structures of his *Psalmodia christiana*, Sahagún reconciled Nahua and Catholic traditions. The *Psalmody* opens with the Feast of Circumcision ("inic oquimoculi in Circuncision") in January, rather than the Advent season that marks the beginning of the liturgical year. Rhetorical devices such as parallelism, near-repetition, and metaphors inspired by the natural world, especially

those involving flowers, connect the *Psalmodia* with the aesthetics of Nahuatl verse (15 v).[46]

Colonial language encounters required that missionary texts be hybridized and linguistically hospitable; in many cases, indigenous agents drove these accommodations. For example, following the death of bishop Diego de Landa, thirteen Maya elites gathered in January 1580 to draft a letter to Felipe II.[47] Dictating their terms from Mérida, Yucatán, the caciques requested that the Spanish king replace de Landa with a Franciscan. As examples of suitable friars, they named Fray Luis de Villalpando, who, according to de Landa, had known more of the language than any other priest, and Fray Gaspar González de Nájera, who transcribed the caciques' letter into alphabetized Yucatec and translated it into Spanish.[48] According to the caciques, to know Mayan was to know Maya people. They structured the letter so as to perform their ways of knowing.

By comparing the verbs "to know" in Yucatec and Spanish, we can appreciate how Mayan–Franciscan collaborations conveyed different kinds of knowledge than those expressed in the Spanish-language letter. The Spanish translation uses the conventional term of knowing a person: *conocer*. "Suplicamos a tu Mag[es]tad nos embies otro pastor En su lugar quien ame y faborezcan en más necesidades y asi mesmo nos conozca como nos conocía nuestro amado padre sobre dicho" (We ask Your Highness to send us another priest in his place who loves us and favors us in our great need, and likewise who knows us as our aforementioned and well-loved priest knew us). But in Yucatec, the caciques ask for someone "who knows of us" in "this, our land" ("way tac peten lae heex cah keculoob tas maya thanile"), and they use a verb that registers such facts – *ojeltiko'on* ("ohel ti coonz" in colonial orthography). The letter implores, "cen chie okotba caah tatepah lee cees atus chi tees u hel toon yacumi coon yetel anti coon tac num yail ohel ti coonz" (it is asked of Your Highness that you send another to us who loves us and helps us, even with pain, who knows of us like our deceased lord did).[49]

Yucatec, like Spanish, has multiple verbs for knowing, including *ojel* ("ohel"), to know as a fact, similar to the Spanish *saber*, and *k'ajóol*, to know a person and her inner spirit ("óol"), similar to *conocer*. The Maya request to Felipe II about the new bishop of Yucatán uses the same verb to display both types of knowing ("your Magesty knows [*u yojel*] of the death," "send another who knows of us [*ojeltiko'on*]"), though the Spanish letter employed different verbs ("ya abia sabido tu mag[es]tad," "nos conozca como nos conoçia"). Nájera's transcription thus preserves the ways in which Yucatec speakers articulated their ways of knowing, while

the translation accommodates them to Spanish convention. Such accommodations of language, thought, and even belief are characteristic of missionary linguistics in the colonial Americas.

With a comparative framework of similarity and difference, we have seen how Puritan missionary linguists both disagree with each other and resemble Christian writers in the Atlantic world. While Eliot and Williams at times differ on language's ability to challenge imperial claims to Native lands, at other moments they resemble Catholic missionaries who accommodated indigenous traditions and collaborated with Native interpreters to gather data that shaped transatlantic debates about language, philosophy, and reform. In this way, missionary literatures contributed to emerging linguistic sciences, with books that catalogued plants and parts of speech, letters that invoked scientific principles of analogical thinking, and hymnals that reconciled competing horologies into communal celebrations of the spirit. In each case, the agencies of indigenous interpreters shaped missionary understandings of language, including beliefs that are conveyed through language and go beyond it.

Puritans are, by definition, considered "separatists." Their beliefs about the right way to exercise one's faith in the world called them to advocate for a return to a "pure" church; as they acted on these core beliefs, many Puritans chose migration, a path of physical separation from England and its official Church. And yet, Puritan missionaries were not separate from larger spiritual or scientific issues that characterized many early modern polemics. Historically viewed by some scholars as "Separatists among Separatists," missionary linguistis John Eliot and Roger Williams's experiences in Algonquian-speaking communities integrated them into Puritan intellectual, social, and theological life.

When we situate the grammars and conversion materials that Eliot and Williams developed over time and in collaboration with indigenous instructors within hemispheric and transatlantic debates about language, faith, and communication, a different view begins to emerge. Learning indigenous American languages did not place Puritan missionaries outside of early modern Puritan thought, Protestant millenarian convictions, or Christian evangelization in the New World. Rather, their collaborations with indigenous interpreters and instructors integrated them into larger and deeply important conversations about language, knowledge, and faith in this lifetime, and the world to come.

Any comparison of Puritan and Catholic writing must acknowledge the central theological differences in the two traditions. But any comparison of the language of Christian missionization in the New World ought also to

recognize their similiarities, and the agencies of indigenous people in promoting these grammars of spiritual hospitality. In this chapter, I have used a broadly comparative scope to show key connections between linguistic ecumenism in the colonial Americas and the development of universal languages in Europe. These overlaps suggest that the traditional binaries upon which the study of language and evangelization in the early Americas has long rested – South and North, Catholic and Protestant, Old World and New – hold little explanatory power for our field today, and that a new approach to Puritan studies can play an important role in refashioning our approach to language and spiritual encounter in the seventeenth-century.

Notes

1. Antonio de Nebrija, *Gramática de la lengua castellana*, ed. Antonio Quilis (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1981 [1492]), 1. All translations from Spanish, Portuguese, and Yucatec are mine.
2. Lyle Campbell, *American Indian Languages: The Historical Linguistics of Native America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 30. Columbus's promise on November 6, 1492, represents an early example of such logic: "Tengo por dicho, Serenísimos Prínçipes, que sabiendo la lengua dispuesta suya personas devotas religiossas, que luego todos se tornarían cristianos," *Los cuatro viajes*, ed. Consuelo Varela (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2011), 89.
3. Edmund Morgan, *Roger Williams: The Church and the State* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967), 4; Perry Miller, *Roger Williams: His Contribution to the American Tradition* (New York: Atheneum, 1962), 25, and *Errand into the Wilderness* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1956), 29.
4. For North America, see Sarah Rivett, *The Science of the Soul in Colonial New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Kristina Bross and Hilary E. Wyss, eds., *Early Native Literacies in New England: A Documentary and Critical Anthology* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008); and Birgit Brander Rasmussen, *Queequeg's Coffin: Indigenous Literacies and Early American Literature* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012). For Latin America, see Dennis Tedlock, *2000 Years of Mayan Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), and Joanne Rappaport and Tom Cummins. *Beyond the Lettered City: Indigenous Literacies in the Andes* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).
5. José de Acosta, *Historia natural y moral de Las Indias: en que se tratan las cosas notables del cielo, y elementos, metales, plantas, y animales dellas . . .* (Sevilla: Juan de León, 1590), 401.
6. John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Scott Elledge (New York: Norton, 1993 [1669/1674]), 9:837.
7. Samuel de Champlain, *The Voyages and Explorations of Samuel de Champlain, 1604–1616* (New York: AMS Press, 1973), vol. 1, 9.

8. Ambrósio Fernandes Brandão, *Os diálogos das grandezas do Brasil* [1618?], ed. Rodolfo García (Rio de Janeiro: Dois Mundos Editora, 1943), 275.
9. John Eliot, *Indian Grammar Begun, or, An Essay to Bring the Indian Language into Rules for the Help of Such as Desire to Learn the Same, for the Futherance of the Gospel Among Them* . . . (Cambridge, MA: Marmaduke Johnson, 1666), 5. Subsequent citations will be noted parenthetically; italics are original unless specified.
10. Samuel Whiting, *Abraham's Humble Intercession for Sodom, and the Lord's Gracious Concessions in Answer Thereunto* . . . (Cambridge, MA: Samuel Green, 1666), n.p. [A4].
11. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550–1700* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); Alan Durston, *Pastoral Quechua: The History of Christian Translation in Colonial Peru, 1550–1650* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).
12. Amanda B. Moinz, *From Empire to Humanity: The American Revolution and the Origins of Humanitarianism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 12–31; Pratik Chakrabarti, *Medicine and Empire, 1600–1900* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 26–30.
13. Carla Gardina Pestana, *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 6.
14. Phillip H. Round, *Removable Type: Histories of the Book in Indian Country, 1663–1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Kristina Bross, *Dry Bones and Indian Sermons: Praying Indians in Colonial America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).
15. Paolo Rossi, *Logic and the Art of Memory: The Quest for a Universal Language*, trans. Stephen Clucas (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).
16. Mary Slaughter, *Universal Languages and Scientific Taxonomy in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), x.
17. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Leibniz and Ludolf on Things Linguistic: Excerpts from Their Correspondence, 1688–1703*, trans. John T. Waterman (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), 40–43, 27.
18. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, trans. and ed. Leroy Loemker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 2.
19. Richard Bulkeley, ed. *A Collection of Papers, Which Passed between the Late Learned Mr. Leibnitz, and Dr. Clarke, in the Years 1715 and 1716: Relating to the Principles of Natural Philosophy and Religion* . . . (London: James Knapton, 1717), 72–73, 140–141, 144–145, Huntington Library.
20. Edward Grant, *A History of Natural Philosophy: From the Ancient World to the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
21. Scott Montgomery, *Science in Translation: Movements of Knowledge through Cultures and Time* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).
22. Michael Clark, ed., *The Eliot Tracts: With Letters from John Eliot to Thomas Thorowgood and Richard Baxter* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 25–26; David Boruchoff, "New Spain, New England, and the New Jerusalem: The 'Translation' of Empire, Faith, and Learning (translatio imperii, fidei

ac scientiae) in the Colonial Missionary Project," *Early American Literature* 43 (2008): 5–34, esp. 19–22.

23. Mark Greengrass, Michael Leslie, and Timothy Raylor. *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation: Studies in Intellectual Communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
24. British Library, Western Manuscripts, Sloane MS 859, "Francis Lodwick, FRS: Catalogues of his books: circ. 1680," 77ff: 17v, 11v.
25. On the Hartlib circle, see Richard Yeo, *Notebooks, English Virtuosi, and Early Modern Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); Carol Pal, *Republic of Women: Rethinking the Republic of Letters in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Lorraine Daston, "The Empire of Observation, 1600–1800," *Histories of Scientific Observation*, ed. Lorraine Daston and Elizabeth Lunbeck (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 81–113; Sarah Irving, *Natural Science and the Origins of the British Empire* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008). On alchemy's contribution to New England Puritan culture, see Walter Woodward, *Prospero's America: John Winthrop, Jr., Alchemy, and the Creation of New England Culture, 1606–1676* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).
26. Lodwick, "Concerning a perfect, universall Alfabeth," British Library, Western Manuscripts, Sloane MS 932, 17ff: 2, 4. For paleographic help, I thank my colleagues Ricardo Padrón and Paul Halliday.
27. Lodwick, *A Common Writing: Whereby Two, Although Not Understanding One the Others Language, yet by the Helpe Thereof, May Communicate Their Minds One to Another* (London: Printed for the author, 1646), EEBO, A2.
28. Elizabeth Boone and Walter Mignolo, eds., *Writing without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994).
29. Lodwick, *Common Writing*, 2–5, and *The Ground-work, or Foundation, Laid (or so Intended) for the Framing of a New Perfect Language and an Vniversal or Commonwriting* (London: s.n., 1652), 2–3.
30. Anne Curzan, *Gender Shifts in the History of English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 27–29, 49–55, 100–101; Eliot, *Indian Grammar Begun*, 8.
31. Clark, ed., *Eliot Tracts*, 13.
32. Stuart McManus, "Jesuit Indigenous-Language Philology in Latin America and Asia," *Oxford Handbook of the History of the Jesuits*, ed. Ines Zupanov (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2017).
33. Thomas Thorowgood, *Iewes in America, Or, Probabilities That the Americans Are of That Race with the Removall of Some Contrary Reasonings, and Earnest Desires for Effectuall Endeavours to Make Them Christian* (London: W.H. for T. Slater, 1650), 2.
34. Clark, ed., *Eliot Tracts*, 26.
35. John Eliot, letter to Thomas Thorowgood, in *Jews in America, Or, Probabilities, That Those Indians Are Judaical, Made More Probable by Some Additionals to the Former Conjectures* . . . (London: Henry Brome, 1660), 1, 2, 19.

36. Thorowgood, "To the Impartial and Soul-Loving Reader," 27.
37. John H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: England and Spain in America, 1492–1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 190.
38. John Eliot, *Indian Dialogues, for Their Instruction in that great Service of Christ, in calling home their Country-men to the Knowledge of God, And of Themselves, And of Jesus Christ* (Cambridge, MA: 1671), EEBO, A2v.
39. Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America, Or, An Help to the Language of the Natives in That Part of America Called New-England Together with Briefe Observations of the Customes, Manners and Worships, &c. of the Aforesaid Natives, in Peace and Warre, in Life and Death* . . . (London: Gregory Dexter, 1643), 93.
40. Williams, *Key into the Language of America*, 92; Eliot explains the nasalization of *â* in his *Indian Grammar*, 3. Modern linguists praise Eliot and Williams for recognizing patterns in sound change and contact among Algonquian languages. Campbell, *American Indian Languages*, 34, 52–53, and 341, referring to Williams, *Key into the Language of America*, 27–29. I thank Katie Bragdon for pointing me in this direction.
41. See also Ives Goddard and Kathleen J. Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusett* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society), 2 vols., esp. documents 17, 18, and 22.
42. Goddard and Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusett*, vol. 2, p. 683.
43. See Hilary Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 19–30.
44. Acosta, *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*, 303–393; Bernardino de Sahagún, *Psalmodia christiana y sermonario de los sanctos del año en lengua mexicana* (México: Pedro Ocharte, 1583); Durston, *Pastoral Quechua*, 53–75.
45. Sahagún, *Psalmodia christiana*, n.p. [p. 3 of prologue].
46. John F. Schwaller, "The Pre-Hispanic Poetics of Sahagún's *Psalmodia christiana*," *Psalms in the Early Modern World*, ed. Linda Phyllis Austern, Kari Boyd McBride, and David L. Orvis (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 320–331. Consider Arthur Anderson's nuanced translation of the Ave Maria, "Ma ximopaquiltitie, timotemiltitica in gracia, Dios inantzine, ichpuchtle / Motechtzinco oquiz, otlacat, iecnemliztonatiuh, inquintlanestilia in tlaiouaian meni" ("Be happy, mother of God, virgin; you are full of grace / The Sun of Righteousness Who shines on those who live in darkness has come from you / He has been born"). *Bernardino de Sahagún's Psalmodia Christiana* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1993), 52–53.
47. Archivo General de Indias, México, legajo 104, "Carta de varios caciques de Maya en Yucatán," 8 enero 1580, 4f. Center for Southwest Research, University of New Mexico.
48. Diego de Landa, *Relación de las cosas de Yucatán* (México, DF: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994 [ca. 1566]), 109.
49. AGI, México, 104, "Carta de varios caciques," 2, 1.

CHAPTER 7

Native Poetics in Edward Johnson's Wonder-Working Providence of Sions Saviour in New England

Betty Booth Donohue

American Natives are permanently inscribed in many early American texts, and such texts often bear a Puritan imprimatur. These narratives, which frequently contain their writers' perceptions of Native customs, social practices, agricultural methods, languages, and religious rituals, occasionally leave more than ethnological data behind. Often they give evidence that their writers have absorbed many of the poetics and compositional protocols of the Native oral tradition; consequently, these works clearly reveal an American Indian shaping presence, both thematically and stylistically.

The recognition that American Indians influenced the formation of American letters originates in the early twentieth century and continues to the present. Carl Sandburg, writing in 1917, finds similarities between early twentieth-century imagists and Native lyricists. Mary Austin (1923) believes that European-American poets have accessed the land-generated rhythms of Native orature and created a style peculiar to America. Constance Rourke (1942) maintains that treaty signing ceremonials were the first American dramas, complete with scripted language and actions. Michael Castro (1983) explains that Native influence in American poetry occurs when non-Indian poets deliberately emulate Native stylistics. James Noland (1994), elaborating upon Sandburg, asserts that what has come to be known as "nativist" poetics found in works by Walt Whitman, Vachel Lindsay, and Gary Snyder is largely the appropriation of American Indian poetics, while Walter Mignolo (1995) observes that writing in the entire western hemisphere reveals an intermingling of European and Native materiality and semiotics. Kenneth Lincoln (2000) maintains that styles imported from Europe have melded with American Indian modes and created a hybrid literature, while Joshua Bellin (2001) theorizes that American literature is created within the context of encounter and that

"it is precisely through intimate, rich, dynamic interactions among multiple peoples that American literature exists at all."[1]

American Indian poets and critics have also noted Native influence in American letters. The Mohawk poet Maurice Kenny (1991) states that Native chanters and writers are integral to the foundation of American literature, and the Mvskogee critic Craig Womack (1999) states that Native literatures are not a "branch waiting to be grafted onto the main trunk, [but] . . . are the *tree*."[2] American Indian readings of Puritan writings are endeavors whose time has come, and this chapter follows logically from the preceding assertions. As Matt Cohen points out, "because of the mixture of necessity and threat involved in plugging into indigenous communication systems, the major texts of early settlement call for re-readings with Native audiences in mind."[3] Native responses to canonical works do not undermine the validity of previous readings, but they do provide additional layers of interpretative and postulatory significance to colonial works. Perhaps more important, they underscore the importance of early writers to the formation of American letters.

Edward Johnson's *Wonder-Working Providence of Sions Saviour in New England, 1628–1651* (London, 1654) is one such text. Johnson immigrated to Massachusetts in 1630 as part of the Winthrop contingent. Eventually settling in what is now Woburn, Massachusetts, Johnson helped establish the first congregational church and served as its clerk. An extremely versatile man, he was assigned military duty and given the rank of captain. Johnson also served as a surveyor, regional explorer, and map-maker.

Although *Wonder-Working Providence* is a chronicle of the colonization of Massachusetts, a hagiography of its Founders, and a delineation of then-current theological issues, the history also contains a significant amount of Native matter that includes commentary on Native persons, their actions, their cultural practices, and their contributions to European survival. In addition to its ethnological reflections, *Wonder-Working Providence* also exhibits a wide variety of Native narrative protocols that are clearly observable in works in the American Indian oral tradition. It can be surmised that Johnson's absorption of Native stylistics was unwittingly accomplished, but, either knowingly or unknowingly, the historian recorded more than he likely intended.[4]

Wonder-Working Providence contains three major thematic divisions. The largest part of the history documents the founding of churches and settlements in Massachusetts and character studies of the Puritan ministers associated with these churches. Attached to this portion of the history are generous descriptions of theological concerns, and, for the most part, it is

Johnson's Christian matter that receives critical attention. A second segment of the volume is dedicated to describing the commercial growth of the Massachusetts settlements and the colonists' subsequent consumerism as they transitioned from spring water to Madeira. The third thematic segment of *Wonder-Working Providence* takes up American Indian issues.

After a brief introduction specifying rules for the settlers' expected deportment in the New World, Johnson begins the American part of his history, a section that begins and ends with Native people. Johnson's initial depiction of Native people in New England is fleshed out by his fairly detailed catalogue of Nations living in the region. He asserts that New England's "Abarginny" men consist of "Mattachusets, Wippanaps, Tarratines, Nianticks, Narrowganssits, and Pecods," and he understands their divisions of government to be "Saggamore ships." He designates their major gods as "Squantam" and "Abbamocho" (good and evil deities), and he describes their "Powwowes" as doctors who "work partly by Charmes, and partly by Medicine." He relates that these groups had earlier been decimated by a "sore Consumption" that swept away "whole Families, but chiefly yong Men and Children."[5] Conflating the historical figures of Samoset and Tisquantum earlier described by Edward Winslow in *Good Newes from New-England* (1624), Johnson reconfigures the two as one Native superhero who was "instrumentall" in acquainting Plymouth with her Native neighbors. A passage nearly identical to this one ends the history so that *Wonder-Working Providence* is framed by Native people. Inside this encasement, the English are dramatically prodded, frightened, teased, and sustained by American Indians.

Johnson's Native narrative is anchored to the diegetic text by a series of vignettes that depict vivid portraits of Algonquian men and women. These vignettes spell out motivations for the Natives' political activism in ways that reveal the complexity of the rapidly changing political situation facing them and the Natives' reasoned responses to it. As the vignettes and their accompanying Native tropes and allusions coalesce, Johnson's American Indian narrative is formed and Native reactions are recorded. Granted, Johnson and other colonists were often eyewitnesses to the events they described and they regularly received information from purported eyewitnesses, but their frequently contradictory reports were often flawed because few of them were fluent in Native languages and their previous exposure to indigenous cultures was largely nonexistent. Imperfect as these accounts are, when they are interpreted in light of twentieth century anthropological findings and American Indian cultural practices they offer new insights into Native agency.

An example of a flawed Puritan relation is seen in Johnson's description of the Indian "attack" on Linn involving one Lieutenant Walker. While on guard duty one night, Walker felt an object brush his shoulder and he concluded that an arrow had flown past him. He immediately aimed his weapon in the direction the missile originated, fired, and raced back to the guard house. Once inside, his fellow militiamen found an arrow lodged between Walker's legs dangling from his coattails. The men huddled together the rest of the night and their reconnaissance the next morning revealed no evidence of Native presence; nevertheless, the soldiers discharged their guns into the void, made a big racket, and reported that they had repelled menacing Indians.

The placement of this vignette in Johnson's history is telling. The incident appears in chapter XXV and bears the subtitle "*Of the Lords gracious protection of his people, from the barbarous cruelties of the Heathen*." This scriptural-sounding heading is followed by the avowal that the Mi'kmaqs or Tarrantines, who actually lived north of Massachusetts, were inclined toward cannibalism and represented the most savage of New England's tribes. In this way, Johnson prepares his readers to anticipate Native barbarity before they encounter the Walker narrative. The biblical-like heading prefacing the episode suggests absolute truth and underlines the theme of savagism running through the chronicle. Johnson completes the Walker passage by relating that the English, who were "few in number" in the 1630s, kept a "constant watch . . . so much that they were exceedingly weakened with continued labour, watching, and hard diet" (78–79). Passages like this one accomplish two ends: They reinforce Johnson's paradigm of good Christians vs. evil Natives, and they suggest that the starving, overwrought Europeans were painfully paranoid and likely prone to hallucinations.

Johnson's text states that one arrow was felt and one was found. My interpretation of this account is that it is quite likely that somewhere around Linn was a Native practical joker playing a prank. This person, probably a young man and not yet a good marksman, was likely testing the immigrants' mettle. Had there been real peril, the outcome would have been decidedly different. In order to contextualize this passage, it may help to know that in many Native cultures teasing is an integral part of life because it teaches lessons in social interaction and allows for character judgments to be made based on the way people react to jests. Among various Nations, joking, humor, horseplay, clowns, and contraries are features of Native life and they have serious, and sometimes ceremonial, functions. These aspects of Native culture should be taken into

consideration when evaluating Native agency. A bi-cultural reading of the Walker narrative expands the work's interpretative range, broadens its appeal, and enriches its historical value.

Wonder-Working Providence's vignettes depicting Algonquian people, their leaders, and their discourse offer many insights into the effects of colonization on Native populations. Several riveting scenes portray the agony American Indians endured as smallpox epidemics ravaged their communities. Johnson takes us to the deathbed of Saggamore John (Wonohaquaham) as he hands off his sons to the Reverend Mr. John Wilson and ostensibly to John Winthrop.[6] More distressing, he recounts the English discovery of a Native infant attempting to suckle the breast of its dead mother who was lying in a wigwam filled with corpses. Johnson does not relate what happened to the child, but says only that "the English were forced to dig holes, and drag their stinking corpses into them" (80). Such scenes will reverberate through American history and they prompt incredible sorrow. Johnson's written account here prefigures the photographic documentation of the mass burial of Big Foot's band of Lakotas killed at Wounded Knee in 1890 and the discovery of the infant, Zintkala Nuni, who was found there with her dead mother. References to Native deaths are recurring features of Puritan discourse and they create a semiotic apparatus that generates illusions of vanishing Indians, a conquered wilderness, the providential triumph of the godly, and other well-established American narratives. These narratives have created a framework for American thought, rhetoric, politics, and literary interpretation that until the twentieth century went largely unchallenged. *Wonder-Working Providence*, with its serial documentations of Native losses, is one of the first of such narratives. Paradoxically, however, the history undermines its assertions of Native cultural demise with its demonstrations of Native narrative protocols being absorbed into English works.

In terms of Native presence, the chronicle's catalogue of Native headmen is substantial. Vignettes depicting various American Indian leaders – men such as Sowheag, Mixan, Pessacus, Uncas, Pomham, Soccananocoh, Canonicus, and Miantonimo – constitute a significant portion of the Native staging in *Wonder-Working Providence*. Johnson's scenes depicting the Narragansett principal chiefs, Canonicus and Miantonimo, are astute character studies. Canonicus was a Narragansett sachem and the uncle to Miantonimo. Prior to initiating the Pequot War, which was a scheme designed by Hartford and Boston to wrest control of Connecticut from the Pequots and their allies, the English leaders sent an embassy to Canonicus in July, 1636 in order to elicit his aid in the effort.

The Narragansetts were one of the most populous Nations at that time, and it was essential that they be kept from allying with the Pequots if the takeover of Connecticut were to occur. When this meeting took place, the Pequots and the Narragansetts were reported to have occasional differences and Boston and Hartford hoped to profit from their discord. Johnson reminds us that at the time of this parley, Canonicus was seventy-four. He had recently handed power over to his nephew Miantonimo; however, he participated in this meeting as a counselor.

Johnson, who seems to have been present at this council, writes that the Narragansetts entertained the visiting contingent very well. They served them corn and blackberry pudding with bread made of boiled chestnuts mixed with a sweetener. The assembly was held inside a large wigwam, nearly fifty feet in diameter. Canonicus and Miantonimo were accompanied by a large group of followers and "with much sober gravity they attend[ed] the Interpreters speech. It was matter of much wonderment to the English, to see how solidly and wisely these savage people did consider of the weighty undertaking of a War" (162–163). Johnson reports that Canonicus was circumspect in his comments while Miantonimo, who had correctly analyzed both sides of the situation, was unreservedly forthright. Johnson views Canonicus as a "discreet" elder statesman inclined toward peaceful settlements. His assessment of Miantonimo is quite different. Johnson tells us that Miantonimo was "a very sterne man, and of a great stature, of a cruell nature, causing all his Nobility and such as were in attendance to tremble at his speech" (162). Johnson recollects that Miantonimo pointed out that the Natives were more numerous than the English and their forest skills were superior to those of the whites. On the other hand, he acknowledged that the English had guns and ammunition, an advantage of great significance, and he understood there was the possibility that the Crown could send military reinforcements to Boston's aid. Additionally, the Narragansett leader, fully aware of the Pequots' reputed war-mongering tendencies, believed that his own people, whose lands lay close to Pequot territory, were not temperamentally inclined to retaliate with the same kind of blood lust regularly attributed to the Pequots. For reasons of Pequot proximity and ferocity, coupled with British fire power, Miantonimo decided to take a middle course and attempt to get along with both groups.

The English left the conference disappointed. They felt that they had achieved only tentative support from Canonicus and nothing from Miantonimo. The Pequots, cognizant of this meeting and sensing impending trouble because the Connecticut English had begun sending aid to the

Massachusets, now began to exhort other Nations to join them in fighting the settlers. According to Johnson, Canonicus intervened and advised the Pequots to stop their advances because war was a no-win situation for victors and vanquished alike. He reiterated Miantonimo's observation that the English, with their armor and deadly weapons, had superior arms, and that to engage them in war was futile. The best course of action was to surrender the men who reputedly had killed John Stone and John Oldham in earlier incidents because these murders were Boston's excuse for laying waste to the Pequots. The conundrum was, however, that the Pequots had not killed these men, and other tribes that may have been involved with the incidents either could not or would not hand over the guilty parties.

Johnson's account of the Pequot War, particularly with regard to the Mystic massacre, largely supports the information supplied by the two field commanders, John Mason and John Underhill; however, his remarks about military events after the firing of Mystic offer unique opportunities for new insights into this conflict. Perhaps Johnson's most memorable Native vignette concerns the Great Swamp Fight near Fairfield, Connecticut. Several months after Mystic, the English surrounded the remaining Pequots who were hiding in the swamp, but they were unable to pursue them successfully because they could not find their way through the bog. Perhaps more exasperating, the Natives would discharge arrows at the English and then submerge themselves in water to escape being hit by bullets. Frustrated, the Bay troops eventually spotted a Native running through the swamp carrying a kettle on his back, possibly enticing them to follow, and they gave chase. By watching the man, they were able to find dry footing, locate some Pequots, and make some kills. As several English soldiers lingered behind their comrades "two Indians . . . much like a hungry hauke . . . swiftly snatched [one of them] up in their tallens, hoising him upon their shoulders, [and] ran into the swamp with him." The soldier struggled to free himself, but was unable to do so. Eventually a Captain Davenport, who had come to his aid, "was prevented by the buckler they held up from hitting them, which was the man they had taken: It was matter of much wonder to see with what dexterity they hurled the poore Souldier about" (169–170). Happily, Buckler Man was finally put down and the Indians ran back into the thickets. Whether the Pequots were engaging in puerile capers or exhibiting deep disdain for the enemy is a question that Johnson's history does not address.[7]

Despite *Wonder-Working Providence*'s dedication to Puritan clergymen, Calvinist dogma, congregational polity, and Native threats, from time to time something feminine materializes out of Johnson's patristic rhetoric.

Scattered throughout his text are brief sketches of American Indian women. "Wherefore their Sqawes use that sinfull art of painting their Faces in the hollow of their Eyes and Nose, with a shining black, out of which their tip of their Nose appears very deformed, and their cheeke bone, being of a lighter swart black, on which they have a blew crosse dyed very deepe" (150). Johnson also makes an interesting comparison between English females and Native ones. Prior to the Pequot War, three English women were captured by Pequots. One woman resisted so forcefully that she was killed on the spot while the other two were taken away and questioned. According to Johnson, the Pequots had assumed that making gunpowder was a domestic chore, something like grinding corn, and it would follow that English women would know how to make it. When the Pequot men determined that the white women did not have that skill, the women were quickly traded to the Dutch. In the subsequent passage, Johnson gives his readers his appraisal of Native agency. He conjectures that the Pequots released their English female captives because they found them ignorant and lazy, and he suggests that they did not sexually assault them because they found the women ugly: "[F]or seeing they exceeded not their own Squawes in [domestic] Art, their owne thoughts informed them they would fall abundantly short in industry, and as for beauty they esteeme black beyond any colour" (149–150). Johnson's brief allusions to women, from a Native perspective, are an attempt to balance his text in terms of gender in keeping with the dominant order of the natural world. For instance, in Cherokee thought the sun is female. The moon is male. They complement each other in the natural world and function as a balanced pair. When inserted into narratives they are not sterile symbols, but are productive discursive elements of the text. They empower it.

In addition to the Native history and cultural speculations present in *Wonder-Working Providence*, Native poetics, or the compositional protocols found in works in the Native oral tradition and present-day poetry and novels, is remarkably abundant in Johnson's history.[8] It must be pointed out that Native poetics derives from a Native *Weltansicht* that is very unlike European world views. The primary concern of ritual Native literature is to create, to effect change, or to sustain the social order. It is not mimetic. It has no impulse to replicate what is generally regarded to be "reality" because it creates its own. *Wonder-Working Providence* is what Bellin would call an "intercultural" work because the history reveals that Johnson interacted with Natives and recorded his impressions of them, their words, and their cultural practices; therefore, a critical study of *Wonder-Working Providence* must take this Native matter into account. Or, as Gordon

Sayre points out, colonial writings about American Natives must be analyzed "holistically."[9]

Perhaps the most prominent of Native discursive requisites are the creation accounts. These passages, which are found in most healing rituals and other significant indigenous ceremonials, call up the prelapsarian past, set the thematic trajectory of the work, and center the hearers in terms of the specific geographic locations essential to the particular narrative. Creation accounts also spell out the hearers' proper and expected relation to human and other life forms, and they acknowledge the power of the ancient deities. Johnson's history contains at least thirty-one creation accounts and nearly every one of them recounts, in European terms, the requirements previously listed. For example, Johnson's chronicling of the town gathered at Cambridge locates the settlement on the Charles River, claims its Founders are the mythic Race of Jacobites, and its leader is the "faithfull and laborious Mr. Hooker" (90). Innovative Cambridge is the first town to plant rye, its crops and livestock flourish, and it has been the recipient of "the Lords blessing" (91). The mighty deed associated with Cambridge is the establishment of Harvard College.

Native creation accounts invariably contain stories about supernal heroes and monsters. *Wonder-Working Providence* follows suit. Its expansive panoply of heroes includes John Winthrop, Thomas Dudley, John Cotton, Uncas, Miantonimo, and many others. For monsters, Johnson offers up the deformed "monster" fetuses of Mary Dyer and Anne Hutchinson, which are obliquely referenced, and he logs in a Native Sasquatch marauding through New England. Johnson claims that this figure was a "very ugly and terrible beast for bigness that came into a wigwam and . . . took away six men at a time" (263).

While some of *Wonder-Working Providence*'s Native discursive components, elements such as the creation accounts, are fully developed, others are present but faint. For example, *Wonder-Working Providence* contains very brief allusions to the power of Native medicine, or, in Christian terms, theological power, and it alludes to the primacy of the old gods, two essentials of Native narrative protocols. The tension between Native medicine and Christianity configures and sustains the history's primary theme: the triumph of the Christian God over the savage Antichrist. Johnson insists that Native medicine is powerful enough to turn a snake skin into a living serpent and it can enable a patient to walk on coals.[10] His observations, such as the "Divel having them in very great subjection" and this same devil "ke[eping] them in a continuall slavish fear of him" (263), attest to his perception of the power of Native "gods." Johnson's remarks here underline

a common misconception about Native cultural practice. In seventeenth-century Native America, indigenous people used sacred verbal formulae, often recited by medicine people, to accomplish desired ends. They did not worship gods of evil. Even though Native methods for promoting healing, good fishing, or happy romances were certainly outside the Christian pale, they were in no way satanic. These powerful verbal codes, which the Europeans could not "read," were designed to bring about some kind of desired end and were the equivalent of European writing. Had they been translated into English, they would have appeared to have been short, lyric poems. The "slavish fear" Johnson references here likely underscores their prevalent use and the widespread belief in their efficacy.

Johnson's use of Christian metaphors to contain Native orature and ritual performance does provide a temporary and perhaps comforting disconnect between appearance and American reality, but it does not erase that reality. As Johnson moves frightening Natives from the body of his text to the margins, he does not neutralize them. Instead, he energizes them. From volumes such as *Wonder-Working Providence* and other Puritan narratives, Indians transfer themselves to the American imagination where they thrive and proliferate in romances, film, and graphic novels. The Indians may no longer resurrect snakes, but they certainly enliven Puritan texts and inspire American culture and letters.

Another American Indian device of style, the trickster tale, permeates the Johnson text. The trickster figure frequently appears in works of the Native oral tradition and sacred rituals. Tricksters create exasperating chaos for deserving persons, but their pranks are minimally damaging. Johnson's text reveals a plethora of such characters and they appear both as animate humans or inanimate objects. Archbishop William Laud, Samuel Gorton, Anne Hutchinson, and Jane Hawkins, as well as Gortonists, Papists, Familists, Seekers, Antinomians, Anabaptists, miscellaneous prelates, and prebendaries, are among the historian's animate tricksters. Inanimate beguilers are Johnson's "dismall dessarts" and the "desolate wilderness[es]" that serve as the Puritans' new homes and are places fraught with delusions and the "nearness" of danger. There is also the "dreadful and terrible Ocean of nine hundred Leagues in length" that the godly must safely traverse in order to reach the promised land (49). The worst deceivers of all are the "fourscore grosse errours" of non-congregational doctrines. They are "cursed," "sinfull," "monstrous," and omnipresent. They lurk in Puritan councils, meeting houses, theological publications, and the great out-of-doors, but with the optimistic application of Calvinist doctrine they can be overcome by adherence to the good congregational way and the "sword of the spirit" (270).

Two other important Native tropes appear in *Wonder-Working Providence*. Johnson's history contains a distinct animal narrative as well as a substantial narrative of land that is intricately connected to American Indian people as Native compositional protocols demand. Animal narratives are vital to American Indian works because they refer to the more-than-human characters who facilitated human existence at creation. For instance, when the world was new, the Cherokee spider grandmother stole fire from the sun and gave it to the People. Often such beneficent characters, who are actually powerful spirits, transform themselves into animals so that they can inspire familiarity and not frighten those they assist. *Wonder-Working Providence*'s animal narrative can be broken into the expected categories: wild and domestic, or Native and English. The first English-American trade item was "bever." According to Johnson, Beaver in an "admirable act of ... Providence ... prepared [New England] for [God's] people" (40). Johnson goes on to relate that for survival the early colonists were compelled to subsist on local mussels and clams; furthermore, they acquired a taste for raccoon that Johnson asserts "is not much inferiour to Lamb" (114). From these notations we learn that Beaver made clear the way to New England, while American bivalves and animals kept the colonists alive once they arrived.

Johnson's wild animals are tribally loyal and assist the Natives in their attempts to limit immigration and maintain their land base. Caterpillars cause wholesale English crop destruction and wolves devour the colonists' swine before the settlers can fatten and butcher them. Johnson further reports that at South Hampton the English were beset by dogs owned by the many Indians living there and these dogs were "young wolves brought up tame" (195). Johnson seems to imply that the Native dogs, like the Natives themselves, assaulted the newcomers without valid provocation. As an aside, he notes that Anne Hutchinson, a "wild" woman as unwelcome in Boston as were the Natives, also kept dogs, and these animals assisted in her undoing. When treacherous Indians convinced Hutchinson to tie up her dogs, the Indians entered her property and killed her. In *Wonder-Working Providence*, beavers, mussels, clams, raccoons, canines, lions, bears, foxes, bags, otters, caterpillars, and other "wild creatures" are players in New England's history. They have their own back stories; they demonstrate volition; and they add texture to Johnson's plots.

English animals, on the other hand, supply different dimensions to Johnson's text. Cows, which were among the first domesticated animals imported to New England, rapidly increased to the point that they could be sold annually. The cattle "cloath'd their backs, fil'd their bellies,

and . . . put gold and silver in their purses beside" (209). Johnson makes clear that sheep, swine, and poultry also prospered in New England. The domesticated animals operate as friends to the colonists and accomplish beneficial things for them.

In American Indian literary practice, the land narrative is the most important element of a text. It usually represents the truth of the work and it is this layer of narrative that should be consulted when determining meaning. Humans cannot be trusted, but the earth, the immediate result of creation, is perfect and constant. Land is sacred because it contains the essences of the creating gods. After bringing the earth into being, the gods departed, but they left behind their creative energies that are now hidden in land forms like mountains, rocks, or rivers.[11] Basically, the earth contains the story of creation, the primal narrative, and it continues to hold creative narrative force. This concept of land is diametrically opposed to the Puritan view that New World land was essentially an antagonistic and demonic entity, but once tamed could become a coveted possession.

Johnson's land narrative runs from his documentation of a 1618 comet sighting to the end of his chronicle. Within this stratum of text he gives accounts of storms, seasons, rivers, oceans, winds, the "Saggamooreship" of Aggawam, or Aggawam's territory, corn, livestock, meadows, timber, pastures, flocks, plants, fish, and tillage. Johnson writes that Concord is "seated upon a faire fresh River, whose Rivulets are filled with fresh Marsh, and her streames with Fish . . . Allwifes and Shad" (110). In speaking of the Reverend Mr. Thomas James and his followers who came to Charles Towne, Johnson writes that "this Wildernesse people . . . caught [fish] with their hands, and so with Fish, wild Onions, and other Herbs were sweetly satisfied till other provisions came in" (83). He goes on to document that the year 1632 "was ended with a terrible cold Winter, with weekly Snowes, and fierce Frosts . . . so bad that people could walk from one island to another" (84). Despite the harsh winter, the New England earth was abundantly rich come spring, and the year 1633 brought forth a rush of land ravishment. Johnson recalls that the colonists tore up roots and bushes and cleared forests. They could fence their corn fields easily because "the Lord ha[d] mitigated their labours by the Indians frequent fiering of the woods" (85). Johnson goes on to implore New Englanders never to disparage the humble American pumpkin because "with this fruit the Lord was pleased to feed his people to their good content, til Corne and Cattell were increased" (85). In this passage Johnson melds American Indian people, the earth, Native corn, and pumpkins, a type of squash. This construct has American Indian religious connotations: corn and squash are two of the

three highly revered sisters (corn, squash, and beans), vegetables of venerable as well as nutritional significance to American Natives. This passage suggests that Johnson seems to understand, at least subconsciously, the divine aspects of corn and squash. Although the Puritan historian does not consciously credit Natives, their sacred plants, or their forest management techniques for English survival, it is apparent that it was these features of Native culture that largely saved the Puritans.

In American Indian narrative constructions, land and Native people operate as one entity. When Johnson writes that various locations were so overgrown that passage through them was almost impossible, he seems to conflate American Indians and land so that the land in the following passage adumbrates the perceived fierceness of Native people. Settlers must pass through "Thickets, where their hands are forced to make way for their bodies passage, and their feete, clambering over the crossed Trees, which when they missed they sunke into an uncertaine bottome in water, and wade up to the knees" (112). These early colonists travel in thick forests so devoid of sunlight that they cannot take compass readings. In this wilderness, "they sadly search up and down for a known way, the Indians paths being not above one foot broad, so that a man may travel many dayes and never find one" (113). Through this wilderness the Christian martyrs persevere even though "watery Clouds poure down all the night season, and sometimes the driving Snow dissolving on their backs, they keep their wet cloathes warme with a continued fire, till . . . they [can] burrow themselves in the Earth for their shelter" (113).

An American Indian reading of this passage suggests that as the English burrow themselves into the earth, the source of Native narrative, and as they nourish their bodies with Indian corn, a Native sacramental used for blessing and praying, and as they navigate the four directions along American Indian footpaths, they are redirecting themselves into Native channels and inserting themselves into the poetics of the American Indian oral tradition, a tradition which abides in the earth and expresses itself through the songs and ritual protocols of Native people.

Edward Johnson did not create a pure English text with his *Wonder-Working Providence*, but he did produce an Indianized work in which Natives serve as *dramatis personae* and active participants in the colonization process. His Native characters' human dimensions, complete with foibles as well as nobility of spirit, stand in stark relief to his unbending and humorless Calvinist colonists. Johnson's metaphors of corn and pumpkins trail through his pages like little vines, or printers' vignettes, and they call

attention to his embedded Native narrative. *Wonder-Working Providence* is an unlikely source for Native narratives and stylistics, but it does hold a cache of both. More important, it provides tangible proof of an American Indian literary tradition shaping the course of American letters, a literature filled with Indians both faithful and menacing, as in James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking* saga; animals of marvelous dimension as in Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*; landscapes that shift and propel plots as in Willa Cather's *My Antonia*; and belief systems that center on the earth as delineated in James Welch's *Winter in the Blood*.[12]

Notes

1. Carl Sandburg, "Editorial Comment: Aboriginal Poetry." *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* 9.5 (1917): 254–255. Mary Austin, *The American Rhythm: Studies and Re-expressions of Amerindian Songs.* Facsimile of 1930 edition. (Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 2007); Constance Rourke, *The Roots of American Culture and Other Essays.* Edited by Van Wyck Brooks (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1942); Michael Castro, *Interpreting the Indian: Twentieth-Century Poets and the Native American.* Forward by Maurice Kenny (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991); James Nolan, *Poet-Chief: the Native American Poetics of Walt Whitman and Pablo Neruda* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994); Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003); Kenneth Lincoln, *Sing with the Heart of a Bear: Fusions of Native and American Poetry, 1890–1999* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Joshua Bellin, *The Demon of the Continent: Indians and the Shaping of American Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 3–5.
2. Maurice Kenny, "Foreward," in *Interpreting the Indian: Twentieth-Century Poets and the Native American*, by Michael Castro (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991); Craig S. Womack, *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 6–7.
3. Matt Cohen, *The Networked Wilderness: Communicating in Early New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 124.
4. For articles on the transfer of cultural influence, see A. Irving Hallowell, "The Rorschach Technique in the Study of Personality and Culture," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 47, No 2 (Apr.–Jun. 1945), 195–210, and Michele Espagne's argument summarized in "What Is Cultural Transfer?" ht tp://eu.spb.ru/en/index/news-archive/2014/13764-cultural-transfer-en, accessed November 16, 2014.
5. Edward Johnson, *Johnson's Wonder-Working Providence, 1628–1651*, ed. J. Franklin Jameson (New York: Scribner's, 1910), 41. Additional quotations from *Wonder-Working Providence* are from this volume and appear by page number in the body of the discussion.

6. Johnson's account of the Saggamore John episode reflects discrepancies from other texts. For instance, in none of his writings does John Winthrop mention visiting the dying Sagamore or taking his son to rear; neither does he relate that Wilson was the visiting clergyman, but instead implies it was a Rev. Mr. Maverick. Conversely, Benjamin B. Thatcher, in his discussion of this episode, asserts that the other person with Wilson was an unnamed deacon in Wilson's congregation. See Benjamin Bussey Thatcher, *Indian Biography*, 2 vols. (1832; New York: A. L. Fowle, 1900).
7. David R. Wagner and Jack Dempsey, in *Mystic Fiasco: How the Indians Won the Pequot War* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007), argue that the Pequot Massacre did not take place as reported. Wagoner and Dempsey maintain that the Pequots anticipated the English attack and hid their people away. The English were so embarrassed about falling for the trick that they lied about what actually transpired. Because the English needed to reassure their communities that the Indian threat was eliminated, prominent leaders conspired to deceive their constituents. Johnson's Buckler Man incident supports Wagner and Dempsey's theories to some extent. It is doubtful that people who had lost seven hundred kinsmen would play childish games with English soldiers.
8. For more on Native poetics and how it is transferred to American texts, see Betty Booth Donohue, *Bradford's Indian Book: Being the True Roote & Rise of American Letters as Revealed by the Native Text Embedded in Of Plimoth Plantation* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011) and "Remembering Muskrat: Native Poetics and the American Indian Oral Tradition," in *The Cambridge History of American Poetry*, ed. Alfred Bendixen and Stephen Burt (Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 2014), 15–42.
9. Gordon Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 31.
10. See William Wood, *New England's Prospect*, ed. Alden T. Vaughan (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1977), 101, for a similar snake revival attributed to Passaconaway.
11. See Susan Scarberry-Garcia, *Landmarks of Healing: A Study of House Made of Dawn* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990) for more on this subject.
12. Natives have also inspired twenty-first-century critical theories such as geo-critical, ecocritical, performance theory, and critical animal studies.

CHAPTER 8

Pregnancy and Anxiety: Medicine, Religion, and the Occult in Cotton Mather's The Angel of Bethesda

Brice Peterson

Amid the litany of aches and pains, cordials and poultices, worshipful devotion and spiritual censure that *The Angel of Bethesda* chronicles, Cotton Mather curiously includes a rather long-winded section entitled "Retired Elizabeth" that attends to pregnancy and childbirth. It might seem strange to our twenty-first-century sensibilities that Mather would place a discussion about pregnancy among presentations of "*Womens Diseases*," stammers, gout, and rheumatism.[1] Situating pregnancy alongside maladies, Mather reveals his pathological view of gestation and childbirth, yet he devotes only three pages to physiological cures, and more than ten to providing religious advice and explicating the fetus' mystical "*Shaping in Secret*" (237). In a publication that dedicates itself to examining health problems, spiritual depravities, and mystic happenings, Mather's essay on "Retired Elizabeth" is an unexpectedly potent site in which he attempts to reconcile disparate epistemologies: eighteenth-century medicine, Puritan theology, and a belief in the occult.

Scholars have long commented on Mather's interest in science, religion, and mysticism; however, in their discussions they have yet to reconcile how pregnancy or gender fits into *The Angel of Bethesda*'s medicinal and theological agenda.[2] The feminized space of the early modern birthing room suggests that Mather should not even metaphorically "be" there. Early modern women congregated around expecting mothers and directed the happenings of the birthing room before, during, and after childbirth.[3] Mothers, sisters, cousins, and other female relatives and friends provided emotional and physical support for the expectant mother, and they screened her from the outside world. If early modern society set aside the birthing room as a strictly feminine sphere, why does Mather focus on pregnancy in his medical devotional manual, when women primarily managed pregnancies?[4]

The micro-managerial control with which Mather attempts to direct the physical, spiritual, and mystical aspects of a woman's pregnant body reveals his deep concern about the unknowable and unpredictable. Consequently, Mather concentrates on the mind, rather than the mysterious body, as the cause of many incurable maladies, and so he exhorts physicians to ascertain,

> with all possible Ingenuity of *Conversation* . . . what matter of *Anxiety* there may have been upon the Mind of the *Patient*; what there is that made his Life *uneasy* to him. Having discovered the *Burden*, Lett him use all the ways he can devise, to take it off. Offer him such *Thoughts* as may be the *best Anodynes* for his Distressed Mind[.] (35–36)

Mather's attention to easing a patient's anxiety reveals his own unease about cognitive dissonance. He is, in short, apprehensive about anxiety. Hence, in "Retired Elizabeth," Mather meticulously tries to pin down the uncertainty of the pregnant body, asserting control over it by trivializing female midwives, circumscribing religious behavior, and describing the mystical formation of the fetus. His belabored "*Conversation*" about pregnancy reveals his uneasy desire to reconcile the medical and theological complexities concomitant with childbirth. Mather's section on pregnancy constitutes a touchstone that models how he attempts to work through other broader epistemological questions spurred by the early Enlightenment. He aims not only to master obstetrics but also to interweave medicine, religion, and the occult. While *Biblia Americana* and *The Christian Philosopher* have been recognized as Mather's primary attempts to merge religion with Newtonian science, *The Angel of Bethesda* highlights the apprehensiveness behind such a reconciliative agenda.[5] In his epistemological balancing act, Mather is not interested in truth-discovering as much as he is in truth-managing, and thereby providing New England with another advice book on how to incorporate sound theology into a burgeoning Enlightenment.

Midwifery, Labor, and Breastfeeding

Midwifery and childbirth in early modern Europe and colonial America were primarily a female affair. Although male physicians could provide gynecological examinations, women more frequently preferred female midwives due to the embarrassing confidences which they needed to share about bodily and sexual matters.[6] In America, women dominated the profession through the eighteenth century, and midwives were

recognized for their expertise and were prominent figures in society.[7] Childbirth was a communal event with access restricted to women alone. The husband and other male relations were not allowed to enter the room, even for several days after childbirth.[8] With men excluded from nearly all parts of childbirth, the birthing room provided a space where women experienced autonomy and could rather openly exercise authority over men.[9]

Male clergy and physicians in England were not completely complacent about being left out of the birthing room; the professionalization of medicine in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries included measures to regulate and institutionalize midwifery. As early as 1606, the Church began licensing midwives, prescribing religious, practical, and epistemic standards regarding midwife training and practice.[10] Those who failed to comply suffered the threat of excommunication. The salvific severity of such a penalty highlights the Church's deep investment, as a male-dominated institution, in regulating female activities. While the Church licensed midwives up through the seventeenth century, the College of Physicians, established in 1518, regulated and licensed general practitioners; nonetheless, in 1616, Dr. Peter Chamberlen wrote a proposal to the College asking for the formal organization of midwives. However, he was rejected. A similar plan proposed by Chamberlen's son was rejected in 1633.[11] The Chamberlens' attempts, as well as the Church's, reveal concern about imposing control over medical authority and practice. Despite their efforts, midwives – licensed and unlicensed – continued to possess primary authority in the birthing room.

Yet, "men-midwives" began to intrude into the birthing room in the late seventeenth century, and male physicians performed more complicated births and emergency surgeries.[12] Women learned to fear the intrusion of the male physician into the birthing room, for his presence portended complications and death.[13] The invention of the forceps by Chamberlen's family and the appearance of man-midwives signal the beginning of a shift from female-managed birth to male-managed birth.[14] Forceps provide a potent metaphor for this change. As an external instrument that breaches a woman's pregnant body, they represent the male physicians' intrusion into the birthing room. Regardless of how prolifically men were able to intrude, medical licensing and man-midwifery illustrate that men were concerned about circumscribing medical authority and instituting regulations and practices to manage what happened behind the birthing room's closed doors.

This determination to circumscribe medicinal knowledge and infiltrate the birthing room motivates Mather's "Retired Elizabeth." With the exception of a few lines that relate to child bed fevers and the "Piles" (hemorrhoids), Mather's medical advice about pregnancy falls into two categories: labor and breastfeeding.[15] His directions concerning labor center on managing the female body as to when and how it gives birth. They include remedies such as a cordial to galvanize easy births, a powder for inducing labor, roots to "prevail against the Distemper of the *Womb*" (ineffective contractions), and a prescription to wear a "*Load-Stone*" in order to prevent miscarriage (246–247). All of these, in one fashion or another, are proactive attempts to control the ambiguity of labor, including its timing, the quality and productivity of contractions, and the potential misfortune of early or stillbirths. Demarcating the anomalies of labor, Mather justifies his knowledge of and experience with pregnancy.

He is greatly aware of his delicate authority in the birthing room. In fact, he expects women to reject his assertions that labor can be easily managed: "Doubtless, the poor Women think, there is as little Sense in speaking of, *An Easy Travail*, as the Frenchmen think there is, in speaking of, *An Easy Prison*" (245). Anticipating such a response specifically from women, Mather expresses concern about his medical authority over matters of pregnancy. However, he countermands by mentioning "the Illustrious *Boyl*," thereby pitting women's knowledge against his and other male physicians' "illustrious" capacities. He trivializes women's lived experience by dismissing their fears – all in an effort to establish his authority, which came from a quite informal medical background. Between the ages of eleven and fourteen, Mather began studying medical texts when his stuttering threatened his goal of becoming a pastor. He eventually overcame his stammer and entered the clergy but continued a personal study of medicine from medical manuals, presumably from Harvard Library, and correspondences with doctors in America and Europe.[16] In light of his unofficial training, Mather illustrates concern to establish practical credibility in his advice to Nurses on matters of breastfeeding. After his instructions given in English, he indicates in Latin "*Hoc mea me Conjux Experta docere Volebat*," meaning "This my expert wife taught me" (248). In order to justify his assertions, Mather acknowledges the authoritative knowledge of his "expert" wife. Here, he refers to either his third wife, Lydia Lee George, who was well read and had access to medical texts in her father's library or his first wife, Abigail Phillips, who had practical experience in developing health regimens for devil-tormented individuals. Regardless to whom "expert wife" refers, this sentence, rendered in

Latin, would only have been accessible to those with extensive learning – that is, an almost exclusively male audience.[17] Qualifying his advice in Latin, Mather cloaks his reliance on female authority from other women.

Mather also medicalizes the private and intimate activity of breastfeeding, highlighting further his intrusion into the feminine sphere of childbirth. Dedicating his discussion to a variety of remedies, including "Powder of *Earth-worms*" and "*Milk* turn'd with *Beer*," he instructs mothers and nurses on how to maximize lactation (248). His advice echoes a common practice in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for male-written medical manuals and sermons to prescribe women specific breastfeeding activities.[18] For Mather, the process of breastfeeding mirrors the formative time of gestation: a mother physically forms the baby in the womb and continues to form the child spiritually through her spirit-infused milk.[19] He expresses his belief in the formative powers of breast milk in the title of his catechismal tract, *Spiritual Milk for Babes, Drawn Out of the Breasts of Both Testaments, for their Souls Nourishment*, comparing the nutritive power of his ministerial teaching to "*Spiritual Milk*."[20] Mather's attention to breastfeeding, then, aims to circumvent the uncertainty of a child's nature by managing breastfeeding practices. Inasmuch as an improper labor might produce a deformed fetus, improper nursing might also produce a morally and spiritually malformed child.

Mather's focus on directing labor and optimizing lactation suggests that he was primarily uneasy about female production. Of the many pre- and post-natal diseases and conditions that women suffered from, Mather chose the two issues of pregnancy that fundamentally deal with the female body's ability to produce. Puritan leaders were deeply interested in regulating women's sexual and intellectual productions.[21] Perhaps when focusing his advice on labor and lactation, Mather had in mind Anne Hutchinson and the Antinomian controversy. In the mid-seventeenth century, Hutchinson, a well-known midwife in her community, began teaching a gathering of people in her home, expounding upon and explicating the previous Sunday's sermon. These meetings threatened the ministerial hierarchy of the church, and so Puritan leaders called Hutchinson to trial. Standing trial for these supposed crimes while pregnant, Hutchinson miscarried a deformed fetus, which John Winthrop heralded as a "monstrous birth" and a sign of her wrongful teachings.[22] The connection that Winthrop makes between her fetus and her teachings, her sexual production and her intellectual production, highlights the concern that labor and breastfeeding inspired in Mather.[23] Uncontrolled

and unregulated female sexual production could possibly lead to similar "monstrous births."

Mather, then, asserts imaginative control over the birthing room by intending to replace midwives completely with the advice contained in "Retired Elizabeth."[24] Directing how and when a woman gives birth, he provides the knowledge that a midwife would normally have offered. Indeed, in his lists of procedures and prescriptions, the midwife is ostensibly absent. He refers to medical authorities (Robert Boyle, Thomas Morgan, Thomas Fuller, George Cheyne) and to wet-nurses, but he does not refer to midwives, who were childbirth specialists. Mather does, however, mention midwives twice in the devotional section of "Retired Elizabeth." Meaning to inspire confidence in pregnant women, he relates how the faithful women of the Children of Israel possessed such great faith that they did not need a midwife: "The God who made the *Hebrew Women* so *Lively*, that they were ordinarily delivered before a *Midwife* could come to them, What may He do for *you*, if Suitably Pray'd unto?" (241). "*Lively*," here, has layered meanings. On one hand, it refers to the physical force of labor, reminding readers that God catalyzes contractions, not a midwife. On the other hand, it also refers to spiritual quickening. Earlier in this section, Mather instructs women how to be "quickened," suggesting "That you may be better furnished and quickened for your *Prayers*, you will *Read the Scriptures*" (243). Suggesting that women who follow his devotional regimen may be quickened, Mather also implies that his spiritual instruction can supplant the midwife. Elsewhere, he explicitly champions his devotion over midwives, saying that both spiritual and obstetrical "*Deliverances* come as Effects of His *Commands* unto His Ministers. No *Midwives* can do, what the *Angels* can!" (244). His devotional instruction, those God-given "*Commands*," intends to induce the same righteous quickening and delivery in Puritan mothers that Israelite mothers experienced. Mather not only intrudes into the birthing room but also revises the spiritual management of late gestation and birth along with it.

Compared with the contemporaries he quotes in "Retired Elizabeth," Mather exhibits a greater emphasis on managing pregnancy and a unique desire to exclude midwives. His three pages of focused medical guidance contrast starkly with Boyle's and Morgan's manuals, which only give the briefest of notes on birthing practice and procedure.[25] The attention which Mather dedicates to pregnancy resembles Fuller's text, *Pharmacopaeia Extemporanea*. However, Mather differs in attitude. Fuller maintains a sympathetic attitude toward pregnancy, providing mixtures and drams that promise to "produce an happy Delivery."[26] Where Fuller ensures

a cheerful labor, Mather's approach is adequately summed up in his advice on miscarriages: "the Common Practice is, Only to *Keep Quiet*, and take a Tea of *Double Tansey*" (247). Mather figuratively shuts women's mouths and fills them with his medical advice. His advice tends to offer less respite, and in effect dismisses female experience and supplants midwives' authority with his knowledge. From Boyle, Morgan, and Fuller, Mather borrows recipes and methods; however, it is Cheyne whom Mather parallels in his ideas about managing women's pregnancy. In *An Essay of Health and Long Life*, Cheyne offers sections on pregnancy that focus on directing women's productive ability. Calling women the "breeding Part of the *Sex*," Cheyne argues that women need to be "duly tended and managed," or else their tender and weak nerves will ruin childbirth.[27] Yet, despite Cheyne's denigration of the female body and acerbic assertions about women, he does not dismiss midwives. In general, Mather's medical colleagues ignore midwives. Cheyne and Morgan alone refer to them: Cheyne mentions their existence, and Morgan estimates their skill as somewhere in between a physician's and a "Quack."[28] But neither Cheyne nor Morgan ejects them from the birthing room, as Mather does. Replacing the midwife and other women's experience with other male physicians and his own, Mather exhibits an apprehension about maintaining singular authority in the birthing room. As we shall see, Mather's concern with birthing gestured more broadly to his management of religious culture in a time of increasing skepticism and scientific thinking.

Devotional Pointing and Forming

The pregnant female body posed physical and spiritual dilemmas for seventeenth century ministers. Since childbirth frequently brought death for both mother and child, it was an especially important time for a Puritan mother to ascertain her salvific status. Puritan ministers concerned about pregnant believers created devotional manuals to prepare pregnant women spiritually.[29] These devotional manuals reveal ministers' deep unease over the salvific ambiguity of a pregnant body. Such a physically and spiritually unstable body deserved – indeed, desperately needed – its own special type of devotion.

"Retired Elizabeth" echoes this tradition. Mather's devotional advice suggests that he apprehensively viewed pregnancy as a salvifically formative time. He supposed that pregnancy was a time when women would be most compliant with direction. He writes that, "Tis *Now*, Sure, if ever, a Time

wherein it may be Exepected, that she will hearken to the Counsils of God" (235–236). He also indicates that "*This*, if any, is the Time, wherein the Methods and Motions of Divine Grace, will *find her*" (236). The repeated emphasis on time – "If ever, a time," and "*This*, if any, is the Time" – underscores Mather's concern about the lack of time that pregnancy offers to a pregnant believer. Pregnancy has a cycle that will reach conclusion, whether or not the mother-to-be is spiritually ready. Mather's emphatic reminders about time reveal his sense that pregnancy elevates the salvific stakes for women. If there were ever a time for a Puritan to realize that she was saved, certainly it was before she faced the possibility of fading from this world. Just as pregnancy was a time for women to discern their elect status, it was a time for Mather, a minister, to perform his duties as a spiritual mentor and guide. His goal was to help prepare pregnant believers, so that salvation might "*find*" them. The female sequestering of the birthing room threatened to prevent such ministrations from male spiritual leaders.

Mather feels obliged to secure his readers' salvation by directing, and thus forming, their devotional practices. For the duration of a woman's pregnancy, he prescribes a regimen of prayer, meditation, and scripture reading with a special emphasis on the Psalms. As Mather turns from his discussion on meditation to scriptural reading, he includes the curious phrase, "You may be pointed unto another Description of *Holiness*" (240). The verb "point" – meaning not merely to gesticulate but to "direct thought or discourse" – demonstrates that Mather intends for his advice to direct pregnant women's religious behaviors *and* their inner thoughts.[30] Additionally, "pointed" has religious nuances beyond connotations of management. In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century religious contexts, "pointed" refers to marks added to hymns and psalms in order to indicate how parishioners should accent notes in singing or emphasize words in reading.[31] In using the word pointed in this instance, Mather treats pregnancy like a psalm. The female pregnant body requires devotional direction from a minister in order to perform pregnancy properly.

As he prescribes devotional practices that motivate a woman to cultivate virtue, Mather then can indirectly shape her gestating child.[32] Mather believed that a mother's virtue had a direct impact on her child. He states, "The *Passions* or the *Surfeits* of the Mother make a Strange Impression on the Infant; yea, on the very *Soul* of the Infant" (241). A mother's unbridled (and we can say here, "unpointed") desires could have a potentially adverse effect on her child's spiritual nature. Mather instructs:

> Take up the *Right Thoughts of the Righteous* concerning a Glorious CHRIST: If you have such a *Mind* in you, as in a CHRIST you see a Pattern of; If your *Walk* be such as a CHRIST has left you a Patern of; or, If you *Love*, what a CHRIST Loves, and *Hate* what a CHRIST hates ... Then you have a CHRIST *formed in you*. (241)

As women point their minds, pattern their walk, and direct their emotions toward Christ (as instructed by Mather), their children will achieve a high level of spiritual forming as to become a Christ. In this layering of pointing and directing, Mather demonstrates his uneasy concern about a mother's and child's spiritual unpredictability. Just as he intends to circumvent physically deformed fetuses with cordials and powders, he also means to manage women's spiritual production and avoid spiritually deformed fetuses with scripture and prayer.

Mather's concern in asserting spiritual control over pregnant women is also evident in his exegetical dissection of the female pregnant body, "pointing" it so others know how to "read" it. Mather's interest in submitting pregnancy to hermeneutics derives from a devotional tradition. Ministers often used female sexuality and pregnancy as metaphors for spiritual matters.[33] First, Mather portrays a woman's pregnant body as a symbol for the entire religious lifespan of the world: the creation, incarnation, final judgment, and final salvation of humankind. As a symbol of creation, a pregnant woman represents Eve and her punishment of bearing children for having taken the forbidden fruit; as a symbol of the incarnation, her womb and gestating child symbolize the formation of Christ; as a symbol of the last judgment, pregnant women's labor represents that "Hour" and the "End of Reckoning" that wait for all humans at the last judgment; and as a symbol of salvation, childbirth metaphorizes the "*Safe Deliverance*" of the elect (235–237, 240–241, 244–246). Second, he makes very clear a strong tie between women and Mary, stating "And she [Mary] became in a *Transcendent Sense* owner of a CHRIST immediately ... In an *Agreeable Sense* you become owner of a CHRIST immediately" (239). "*Agreeable*," meaning corresponding, explicitly highlights Mather's exegetical agenda. Readers ought to see and read a correspondence between women and Mary. Third, Mather employs pregnancy as an emblem of salvation, aligning the term *deliverance*, in both its obstetrical and soteriological senses, to suggest that the spiritual preparation for birth typifies the spiritual preparation needed for salvation. Pregnant women are also symbols of Eve, who serves as a metaphor for all humankind's fallen state, in need of salvation (236). Fourth, Mather uses the fetus to represent not just Christ but all three members of the trinity:

"And, if it may be a *Child* of God the FATHER, a *Subject* of God the SON, a *Temple* of God the HOLY SPIRIT, think, *This Enough*" (245). Mather's attentive instruction on how to read a pregnant body demonstrates the meticulous care he takes to assert order and control over the spiritual uncertainties of childbirth. Nonetheless, Mather is concerned less with guaranteeing that others read a woman's body correctly than with exhibiting that a pregnant woman's spiritually volatile body does not escape his interpretive capabilities. His authority, as a minister, is at stake. Therefore, he is anxious to ensure that the pregnant body has no loose ends, spiritually or exegetically.

Retired Women and Secrets of the Womb

Pregnancy shrouded women in isolation. Away from public view, pregnant women became susceptible to occult and mystical influences, in the worldview of the seventeenth century. Childbirth presented an especially potent time for claims of witchcraft or bewitching as mother and child's physical and spiritual fate were uncertain.[34] For this reason, women who had not been invited to witness a birth might successfully accuse the new mother of witchcraft in order to soothe a bruised ego.[35] Excluded from the birthing room and all within, Puritan ministers and men certainly felt some level of curiosity and unease about the dealings withheld from their view. At such a time when the spiritual fate of a woman and her newborn child were uncertain, ministers were especially apprehensive about the hiddenness of childbirth, perhaps attuned to the aural and linguistic closeness of "delivery" and "devilry." Especially for Mather, who conducted experiments in demonic possession, the physical and spiritual demands of pregnancy left both the mother's and child's bodies vulnerable to devilish intrusions.[36]

Mather's concern about the occult comes to light in the title for his section on pregnancy: "Retired Elizabeth." Choosing Elizabeth (the aged wife of Zacharias), who miraculously bore John the Baptist, as the representative figure for his section on childbirth, Mather imbues all pregnancies with the same mystical nature of Elizabeth's delivery. Qualifying Elizabeth with the adjective "retired," meaning (1) "seclusion or withdrawal from society," (2) "remote from observation or access," and (3) "hidden," Mather references Luke 1:24–25, which states that "And after those daies, his wife Elisabet conceiued, and *hid her selfe fiue moneths*."[37] Although also simply a respectful way to refer to a pregnant woman, "retired" coupled with Elizabeth highlights Mather's unease with the female pregnant body, one hidden and removed from his sphere of

medicinal and spiritual influence and thus potentially vulnerable to mystical powers. However, Mather's "Retired Elizabeth" does not leave pregnant women withdrawn. His section aims to "un-retire" pregnant women by intruding into the birthing room, prescribing medicinal and spiritual remedies, and mastering the secret contents of a woman's womb.

In an effort to reveal the mystical powers of the uterus, Mather asserts control over the female pregnant body by describing gestation. He simultaneously acknowledges the mystical nature of pregnancy and circumscribes it by using language to ascribe the process to God's power:

> It is a *Child of God*, which you now have within you. Tis a *Subject* and a *Servant* of a Glorious CHRIST, whose *Bones* are now *growing in the Womb of her that is with Child*. It is a *Member* of His mystical Body, which is now *Shaping in Secret*, and *Curiously to be Wrought*. (237)

On one hand, Christ's "*Bones*" have mystically transcended temporal, locational, and physical constraints to become implanted within a woman's womb. The words "mystical," "secret," and "curiously" all imbue the gestating child with mystic connotations. On the other hand, Mather limits the occult overtones of the event by ascribing the power of creation not to the spiritually unstable mother but to God. In effect, Mather indicates that mothers are not active creators but passive vessels. The child is a subject and a servant of Christ; it is not her creation but God's. Removing the child from its mother's spiritual and physical ownership, Mather safely rescues it from the chance of demonic possession. This is especially evident when he advises mothers to, "Say, *O God of the Spirits of all Flesh, I bring to thee, even my Hoped Offspring; Oh, Lett thy Holy Spirt now take an Early Possession of it; Form it; Fill it; make it an Everlasting Instrument of thy Praises*" (240). Indicating that the Spirit ought to take early possession of the child, Mather reveals his fear of a potential later possession by the devil. Hence, he suggests that a mother should delegate the creative powers of gestation to the Holy Spirit, since her body's spiritual frailty may more likely render the child a victim to demons.

Mather further demonstrates apprehension about devilry in his urgent imperative to baptize the baby soon after it is born. He instructs mothers that after birth, "One of the First Things to be now done, is to give up your *New-born Child*, unto the Lord, in His *Holy Baptism*. Thus rescue the Child from the *Great Red Dragon*, which is watching to devour it" (245). Children, once born, become vulnerable to the influence of the Great Red Dragon (the devil himself).[38] The dragon symbolizes spiritual death: if the child were to be devoured unbaptized, all hopes of salvation would be lost.

The Great Red Dragon also represents the possibility of physical death, the beast-like tragedy of infant mortality. In response to this occult problem, Mather presents both religious and medicinal solutions. Mather reasons that baptism can act as an initial quick fix to the Great Red Dragon; however, because the devil continues to have influence post-baptism, Mather also instructs mothers on breastfeeding, an act that would spiritually and physically sure up children against death. He describes the creative processes of birth and the spiritual fragility of pregnancy in an effort to bring mothers and children out of spiritually dangerous "retirement." His particular attention to possession reveals a profound concern about devilry and, more specifically, the instability of the pregnant female body.

Pointing Uncertainty

Mather's apprehension about pregnancy in "Retired Elizabeth" elucidates his own struggle to assert epistemological authority. Mather does not in a wholesale manner recast medical, religious, or mystical epistemologies; rather, he points them. He emphasizes certain parts and de-emphasizes others. The potential for a woman's labor to produce a spiritually degenerate child informs his physiological focus on regulating labor and his occult focus on assigning the womb's mystical powers to God. His religious belief that mother's milk can spiritually form a child galvanizes his medical interest in breastfeeding. And the spiritual effectiveness of his teachings replaces the medical practice of midwives. Yet Mather still relies on medical practices to ensure women's spiritual state and protect infants from mystical possession. "Retired Elizabeth" presents a complex give-and-take model that conjoins medicine, theology, and the occult.

Mather exerts a similar attention to reconciliation throughout his entire manual. For instance, in order to work out the potentially paradoxical relationship between body and soul, Mather formulates the "Nishmath-Chajim," a mental-spiritual force that actuates the body. He prefaces his discussion by acknowledging the reader's apprehensions about the relationship of body, spirit, and soul: "The Scriptural Anatomy of *Man*, into *Spirit*, and *Soul*, and *Body*, seems to favour and invite the Apprehensions, which we are now proceeding to" (28). In effect, he implies that uncertainty, worry, and concern underlie the entire section. In other places, he suggests that readers ought to be solicitous, concerned, uneasy, and careful about medicinal and religious matters, and he insists that his medical manual means to clarify these apprehensions.[39] The desire to master the

unknown and direct the uncertain nature of truth permeates and fundamentally informs *The Angel of Bethesda*.

Mather's desire for control reinscribes a male-dominated social hierarchy. Puritan doctrine maintained that women, like men, were primarily responsible for their own salvation.[40] However, Puritan men maintained a hierarchical control over society that continually used public influence to shape women's lives.[41] Husbands were in charge of their wives' religious education.[42] Male ministers judged the validity of female conversion stories, which were generally read by a male relative in public.[43] While ministers certainly did not assert that they could save a woman, Mather pushes us to reconsider the extent to which ministers, and men in general, encroached upon female individuality in Puritan soteriology. Mather views his spiritual instructions as vital during pregnancy. True, his advice intends to help the pregnant woman manage her own devotional life; yet, the specificity of his instruction suggests that she cannot do it without his direction. Despite women's doctrinal responsibility over their own salvation, Mather's intense and thorough control over the woman's body in the birthing room, her devotional practices, the formation of the fetus, and even her capacity to be read exegetically demonstrates that he limits her physical and spiritual autonomy on many levels. In pointing her pregnancy, Mather steps on women's soteriological toes.

As a whole, *The Angel of Bethesda* represents a response to the potential incongruities between natural philosophy and Puritanism in the early Enlightenment. It aims to help readers reconcile epistemological paradoxes as much as it means to provide medical and religious advice. As the Enlightenment uncovered new truths about the world, it brought the providentialism of Puritanism and the mechanics of Newtonian science into forceful conversation, catalyzing new uncertainties in how to reconcile a divinely ordered world with one governed by natural forces. Although Mather circulated but never published the book in his lifetime, *The Angel of Bethesda* means to respond to a community problem, an Enlightenment-induced malady: uneasiness in understanding the world. Mather's attempt to circumscribe potentially incompatible ideologies reveals that others had such apprehensions that needed attention – or so, at least, Mather thought. This helps explain why he includes so much detailed attention to religious and scientific theorizing in a guide that expresses a rather simple purpose, "to *Save Life*, and Health, and *Money* too, and serve a *Greater Interest* than all of These, by having Such a *Counsellour* alwayes at hand!" (3). *The Angel of Bethesda*, then, is first and foremost a *counsellor*. Just as it provides medical and religious guidance, it counsels religious readers how to engage with Enlightenment ideas.

Notes

1. Cotton Mather, *The Angel of Bethesda*, ed. Gordon Jones (Barre, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1972), 233; all subsequent Mather quotations are drawn from Jones's edition, with page citations indicated in parentheses following quotations.
2. I rely on Brett Malcolm Grainger's portrayal of Mather as equally interested in theology, science, and occult phenomena: "Vital Nature and Vital Piety: Johann Arndt and the Evangelical Vitalism of Cotton Mather," *Church History* 81 (2012), 852–872. For a survey of varying descriptions of Mather as a religiously inclined scientist or a scientific-minded theologian, see Rick Kennedy, *The First American Evangelical: A Short Life of Cotton Mather* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Erdmans, 2015), especially 107; Robert Tindol, "Getting the Pox off All Their Houses: Cotton Mather and the Rhetoric of Puritan Science," *Early American Literature* 46 (2011), 1–23; Jan Stievermann, "Introduction," in *Cotton Mather and Biblia Americana – America's First Bible Commentary: Essays in Reappraisal*, ed. Reiner Smolinski and Jan Stievermann (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 1–61; Walter W. Woodward, *Prospero's America: John Winthrop, Jr., Alchemy, and the Creation of New England Culture, 1606–1676* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), especially 207–208; Reiner Smolinski, "How to Go To Heaven, or How Heaven Goes? Natural Science and Interpretation in Cotton Mather's 'Biblia Americana' (1693–1728)," *New England Quarterly* 81 (2008), 278–329.
3. See Samantha Cohen Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers: The Puritan Origins of American Obstetrics," *Literature and Medicine* 32 (2014), 365–387.
4. For discussions about Mather and pregnancy, obstetrics, and gynecology, see Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 371; Jean Marie Lutes, "Negotiating Theology and Gynecology: Anne Bradstreet's Representations of the Female Body," *Signs* 22 (1997), 309–340, especially 319–330; Paula A. Treckel, "Breastfeeding and Maternal Sexuality in Colonial America," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 20 (1989), 25–51, especially 33, 38; Judith Walzer Leavitt, "Under the Shadow of Maternity: American Women's Responses to Death and Debility Fears in Nineteenth-Century Childbirth," *Feminist Studies* 12 (1986), 129–154, especially 133; and Catherine M. Scholten, "'On the Importance of the Obstetrick Art': Changing Customs of Childbirth in America, 1760 to 1825," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 34 (1977), 426–445, especially 428.
5. Scholars who paint an apprehensive persona for Mather have yet to examine his anxiety in *The Angel of Bethesda*. See Michael P. Winship, *Seers of God: Puritan Providentialism in the Restoration and Early Enlightenment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 93–110; Smolinski, "How to Go To Heaven," 281, 290–291; and Grainger, "Vital Nature and Vital Piety," 853.
6. A.S. Weber, "Women's Early Modern Medical Almanacs in Historical Context," *English Literary Renaissance* 33 (2003), 358–402, especially 383; see also Monica Green, "Women's Medical Practice and Health Care in Medieval Europe," *Signs* 14 (1989), 434–473, especially 460–461.

7. Scholten, "'On the Importance of the Obstetrick Art'," 429.
8. Diane Purkiss, "Losing Babies, Losing Stories: Attending to Women's Confessions in Scottish Witch-trials," in *Culture and Change: Attending to Early Modern Women*, ed. Margaret Mikesell and Adele Seeff (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003), 143–158, especially 151ff.; and Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 367.
9. Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 367.
10. Doreen Evenden, *The Midwives of Seventeenth-Century London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), especially 24–49.
11. Weber, "Women's Early Modern Medical Almanacs," 399–400.
12. Mary Lindemann, *Medicine and Society in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), especially 126–127; Adrian Wilson, *The Making of Man-midwifery: Childbirth in England, 1660–1770* (London: University College London Press, 1995), especially 5.
13. Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 367–368.
14. Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 369.
15. Even Mather's attention to "hysterics" is only another avenue for attending to labor, providing advice on controlling contractions (246).
16. See Otho Beall, Jr. and Richard Shryock, *Cotton Mather: First Significant Figure in American Medicine* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1954), especially 8–18.
17. Marilyn J. Westerkamp, *Women and Religion in Early America, 1600–1850: The Puritan and Evangelical Traditions* (London: Routledge, 1999), especially 20–21.
18. Treckel, "Breastfeeding and Maternal Sexuality," 25–51.
19. Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 371.
20. Cotton Mather, *Spiritual Milk for Babes, Drawn Out of the Breasts of Both Testaments, for their Souls Nourishment* (London: Printed for Peter Parker, 1668). Puritans in general believed that a mother's milk had the power to inform a child's character. See R.V. Schnucker, "The English Puritans and Pregnancy, Delivery and Breast Feeding," *History of Childhood Quarterly* 1 (1974), 637–658, especially 645–646.
21. Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 373.
22. Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 375–376.
23. Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 375; for a full account of the Antinomian controversy, see Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 373–377.
24. I borrow the term *imaginative control* from Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 369.
25. See Robert Boyle, *Medicinal Experiments: Or, A Collection of Choice and Safe Remedies* (London: Printed for Sam. Smith, 1693), 14, 21, 57, 117–118; and Thomas Morgan, *Philosophical Principles of Medicine in Three Parts* (London: Printed for J. Osborn and T. Longman, 1730), 365–367.
26. Fuller, *Pharmacopaeia Extemporanea: Or, A Body of Medicines, Containing A Thousand Select Prescripts, Answering Most Intentions of Cure* (London: Printed for W. and J. Innys, 1719), 356.

27. George Cheyne, *An Essay of Health and Long Life* (London: Printed for George Strahan, 1725), 189.
28. Morgan, *Philosophical Principles of Medicine*, xxiii.
29. Scholten, "'On the Importance of the Obstetrick Art'," 428.
30. OED Online. Oxford University Press. "point, v[erb]," at 8a, accessed March 15, 2015.
31. OED Online. Oxford University Press. "point, v[erb]," at 6b, accessed March 15, 2015
32. For a discussion on how Mather created devotional regimens for pregnant women to shape their fetuses, see Lutes, "Negotiating Theology and Gynecology," 329–330.
33. Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 366, 370–71.
34. Purkiss, "Losing Babies, Losing Stories," 151.
35. Merry E. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), especially 79.
36. Pershing Vartanian, "Cotton Mather and the Puritan Transition into the Enlightenment," *Early American Literature* 7 (1973), 213–224, especially 219.
37. Geneva Bible, 1587; italics added; I draw my definitions of "retired" from "retired, adj. and n." at 1a, 2, and 3b. OED Online. Oxford University Press, accessed March 15, 2015.
38. Mather here refers to Revelation 12:7, which depicts the devil as the dragon that fought against Michael.
39. Mather emphasizes apprehension in the following passages: "But yett, it becomes us to be very Inquisitive and Sollicitous . . . and Thoughtful" (7–8), "Having thus managed your *Grand Concern*, Lett the Words of an Apostle now come into Consideration with you" (239), "What *Anodynes* for our uneasy Minds!" (14), and "you will see how careful you ought to be that your *Spiritual Health* may be provided for" (13).
40. Westerkamp, *Women and Religion*, 12, 17.
41. Sarah Rivett, *The Science of the Soul in Colonial New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 70–124. For a discussion on how Puritan men used obstetrics to control women, see Tamulis, "Maternity, Midwifery, and Ministers," 366.
42. Margaret Olofson Thickstun, *Fictions of the Feminine: Puritan Doctrine and the Representation of Women* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 18.
43. Westerkamp, *Women and Religion*, 21.

CHAPTER 9

Piracy, Piety, and Providence in Cotton Mather's The Vial Poured Out upon the Sea

Jason M. Payton

Cotton Mather had a career-long fascination with pirates. His tenure as minister of Boston's Old Church brought him into regular contact with pirates who had been caught, convicted, and sentenced to death on the gallows in New England. To these pirates, Mather offered spiritual guidance. To the eager onlookers who attended their public executions, Mather offered stern reminders about the justice that awaited such rogues. To his parishioners, Mather cautioned against the temptations of life at sea. As a minister to a community deeply engaged with the maritime world, Mather understood piracy as a pressing social concern and as the communal manifestation of spiritual malady. As such, piracy could only be rooted out when its spiritual causes were understood and addressed. To that end, Mather launched a literary crusade against piracy that included the publication of four anti-piracy tracts between 1717 and 1726.[1] These tracts came on the heels of the surge in North Atlantic piracy that followed the end of the War of Spanish Succession, and they spoke to a growing public interest in literatures of piracy and in criminal literature more broadly.

This chapter focuses on the last of Mather's tracts, *The Vial Poured Out upon the Sea* (1726). *Vial* is at once the most dramatic and the most enigmatic of Mather's anti-piracy writings. It stages a spectacular confrontation between Mather and the Puritan establishment on the one hand, and the irreverent pirate William Fly on the other, who used his own public execution to protest against the injustices of the maritime labor system and the legal and political order that sustained it. In his earlier writings, Mather understands piracy in primarily spiritual terms. Mather suggests in these writings that pirates commit their crimes because they suffer from the effects of original sin, which corrupts the will and places the individual in a state of spiritual bondage. He also suggests that pirates exhibit an impious disdain for ecclesiastical and civil authority that is particularly pronounced among criminal classes. In these

early writings, Mather represents the theological and political order of society and his piratical audience represents its antithesis. Mather positions pirates as threats to the social order, but he also suggests that religious instruction can redeem pirates and thus preserve the social order. In *Vial*, Mather's understanding of piracy shifts dramatically, as does his understanding of the relationship between Puritan New England and the Atlantic world. *Vial* takes the logic of Mather's earlier tracts as its starting point, but the text's most striking feature is the extent to which Mather and Fly appeal to the common moral language of piety to negotiate questions about the root causes of piracy and the proper response to it. *Vial* opens a new dialogic space wherein figures such as Mather and Fly could adjudicate questions about the social, economic, and religious crises piracy represented using a shared theological idiom. Attending to the nuances of the theological disputation between Mather and Fly in *Vial* opens up the critical space to reimagine New England Puritanism and its errand as deeply engaged not only with the terrestrial frontier, but also with the Atlantic world.

My reading of *Vial* calls scholars of New England Puritanism and the Atlantic world to move beyond the consensus reading of Mather's early anti-piracy writings that has governed much of the scholarship on Puritanism and piracy to date. The story of the stark contrast and violent conflict between representatives of the ruling elite such as Mather and dissident maritime subjects such as Fly has been compellingly told by historians and literary historians.[2] This chapter charts a different course by focusing on the commonalities shared by figures as seemingly different as Mather and Fly. Mather and Fly shared concerns about the rampant abuse of sailors in a maritime labor system that had relatively few checks on the power of ships' captains, and these concerns were expressed using the language of piety. Mather's initial position is that pirates like Fly commit their crimes because they lack the sense of moral decency that guides pious Christians. Fly reminds Mather that many pirates begin their careers as ordinary seamen and are forced into a life of crime by a long train of abuses by impious and unscrupulous captains. Mather resists the implications of Fly's arguments for much of the text, but, crucially, he ends the narrative with the admission that piracy cannot be rooted out unless common seamen and captains alike live piously and treat each other with dignity. By drawing attention to the role that the language of piety played in mediating the debates between Mather and Fly in *Vial* about the etiology of piracy, I show that New England Puritanism engaged the Atlantic world not simply as an oppositional force, but rather as an opportunity to

conceptualize the Puritan errand in relation to the emerging oceanic order of global modernity.

More illustrious pirates abounded in Fly's day, but few pirates achieved greater fame in print. Fly's career as a pirate spanned barely a month during the summer of 1726, when he managed to take five small vessels of little value. He was considered incompetent as a captain, having alienated his crew in the space of mere weeks, and having allowed the captives he took from those five vessels to depose him and bring him to Boston in irons, where he was sentenced to be hanged and gibbeted at the entrance to Boston Harbor. The story of Fly's capture and execution was picked up in local newspapers, including the *Boston News-Letter* and the *Boston Gazette*. It was also an entry in the second volume of the hugely influential collection of eighteenth-century pirate biographies, *The General History of the Pyrates* (1724, 1728), and was made the subject of two lengthy narratives by prominent Puritan ministers: Benjamin Colman's *It Is a Fearful Thing to Fall into the Hands of the Living God* (1726) and Mather's own *The Vial Poured Out upon the Sea* (1726).

Fly's popularity was partly a function of local interest in the increased activity of pirates in the North Atlantic during the golden age. It was also partly a function of a broad cultural interest on both sides of the Atlantic in tales of American piracy. And it was also partly a function of personality. For while Fly was a colossal failure as a pirate, he was a spectacular agitator of both Mather and the public audience he commanded at his execution. Fly agitated Mather by refusing to attend church on the day of his execution, and he agitated both preacher and crowd when he refused to play the penitent at the gallows. Determined to die "*a brave fellow*," Fly approached the gallows with a smile on his face and a bunch of nosegays in his hand. He chastised his hangman for tying a shoddy knot and used his sailor's expertise to re-tie his own noose. He then turned to the crowd and issued a warning to captains in the audience in lieu of the traditional penitent's dying speech. Fly confessed that he turned pirate as a result of "*Bad Usage*" and he warned that the widespread abuse of sailors by their captains would continue to force otherwise honest seamen to the desperate measures of mutiny, murder, and piracy. No number of public executions could save them; only justice for sailors could.[3]

Fly's execution has been read as a clash between two forms of terror: the terror of the state, represented by a selfish wealthy elite and a self-interested Mather, and the terror of the pirate, represented by figures like Fly who threatened mercantile property and the authority of ships' captains and colonial officials alike. On this reading, each side represents a discursive

world unintelligible to the other – "one Christian and providential, and the other maritime and social."[4] Such an approach to Fly's story is compelling, for it captures the dramatic tension that energizes the moment of Fly's execution. What can get obscured by such readings, however, is the startling degree to which Mather and Fly saw themselves as inhabiting a shared world defined by a common desire to see piety practiced with equal devotion on land and at sea.

Mather was actually far more interested in attempting to normalize the pirate through the discourse of piety than he was in placing the pirate in a state of exception that somehow fell beyond the reach of God's providential plan for New England. Just two years prior to the Fly debacle, Mather had trumpeted his success at converting convicted pirates in a volume entitled *The Converted Sinner* (Boston, 1724). In that volume, Mather begins with the acknowledgment that piracy is a serious social problem, but he understands piracy as a fundamentally spiritual problem that requires a spiritual solution. He notes, for example, that a new "Generation of *Pirates*" has raised itself to become the "*Terror of them that haunt the sea.*"[5] But this terror is not for Mather the terror of an alienated working class against its oppressors. Rather, it is the terror of Satan operating through the captive wills of pirates who have been led astray and into bondage to the devil through their lack of piety. Mather implies that pirates are like all sinners in that they simply need to repent and experience the renewing of their hearts and minds and the liberation of their wills from bondage to Satan.

The two pirates who form Mather's audience and act as his interlocutors in *The Converted Sinner* submit entirely to Mather's spiritual authority and they internalize the narrative of criminality that Mather advances. They accept the proposition that their crimes at sea were rooted in the "*Enmity of a Carnal Mind* against GOD" and were expressions of a spirit of rebellion that had manifested itself since their childhoods through parental disobedience, cursing, Sabbath-breaking, and drunkenness. This descriptive taxonomy allows Mather to make piracy intelligible within the broad spectrum of Puritan theology by viewing it as one of many possible expressions of a naturally vile, unregenerate will. By linking piracy to other, more routine breaches of piety like swearing and Sabbath-breaking, Mather suggested that pirates, like all sinners, could be redeemed if they would submit to the process of humiliation, submission, and union with Christ that defined the Puritan concept of conversion.[6]

Mather's pirates are so moved by the hope that the minister holds out for their redemption that they ask him to preach their execution sermon on

the topic of repentance, following the text of Jeremiah 31:18, which reads "*I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus*, – *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, For thou art the Lord my GOD*." Mather chose to gratify the dying wish of the pirates, preaching at length on the process by which sinners could gain the "*New Abilities* and *New Inclinations*" that would allow them to value spiritual riches over worldly riches and live holy lives.[7] The pirates answer Mather's final question about their spiritual estate prior to their execution by saying that they "*heartily give Thanks to God*" that they have been brought to justice in a place like Boston, where "*such pains* [are] *taken for the Good of our Souls*."[8]

Understanding Mather's approach to piracy in *The Converted Sinner* helps us appreciate what is truly singular about the conflict between Mather and Fly staged in *Vial. The Converted Sinner* stands as an exemplary model of what Karen Halttunen has called the "ritual response to the problem of evil" in Puritan New England. The public execution ritual and the gallows literature that grew up around it acknowledged the presence and power of evil, but suggested that evil could be overcome "through an act of reconciliation that mended both the breach between the sinner and God and that between the sinner and the community."[9] The reconciliation between the sinner and God happened when condemned criminals accepted moral responsibility for their crimes, acknowledged their sinful natures, and sued for grace. The reconciliation between the sinner and the community happened when the sinner accepted the atoning sacrifice of Christ and accepted his or her punishment as just.[10]

Unrepentant criminals disrupted the process of reconciliation that lay at the heart of the public execution ritual by challenging the premises and conclusions of the spiritualized narrative of crime advanced by ministers in texts such as *The Converted Sinner*. By denying that their crimes were expressions of a defunct spiritual life, unrepentant criminals also denied the coincidence of spiritual and worldly justice that the execution ritual sought to affirm. In his refusal to play the penitent on the scaffold, Fly appears as precisely this kind of culturally transgressive, unrepentant criminal. Within the text of *Vial*, however, Fly's relationship to Mather appears much more nuanced. The dialogues recorded therein between Mather and Fly testify to the pirate's willingness to express concerns about the labor conditions of common seamen through the moral language of piety, and Mather's closing remarks testify to the minister's willingness to view even rebellious figures like Fly as agents of God's providence.

The first conference between Mather, Fly, and fellow convicted pirates Samuel Cole, George Condick, and Henry Greenville begins similarly to

the conference recorded in *The Converted Sinner*. The pirates thank Mather for deigning to visit them in jail, and Mather initiates the ritual act of reconciliation by attempting to convince the pirates of the severity of their crimes, the justice of their punishment, and the need for repentance. It appears from the opening volley that things will go as planned: to the question about their willingness to be advised by Mather, the pirates answer "*Yes, Syr!*"; to the question of their willingness to repent, they answer "*We hope, we shall*"; and to his claim that they can say nothing to justify their "most *Unreasonable* and *Abominable*" crimes, they answer "*No, Syr, Not a word!*" At this point, however, things begin to go awry, as Fly raises his voice in protest. When Mather states that "There is a cry of *Blood* going up to Heaven" against the pirates for the murders of their former captain, John Green, and first mate, Thomas Jenkins, Fly responds: "I *can't charge my self with Murder. I did not strike and wound the Master or Mate! It was* Mitchel *did it!*"[11] In denying his bloodguilt, Fly disrupts the ritual of reconciliation initiated by Mather by negating its fundamental premise. From this point forward, the conflict between Mather and Fly takes center stage and *Vial* departs radically from Mather's earlier anti-piracy writings in its documentation of the pirate's resistance to his spiritual authority. In the debate that follows, Mather is unable to gain Fly's assent to his narrative about the root causes of the pirates' crimes. What emerges is a tense exchange between the two about the nature of Fly's crimes and the proper response to them.

Mather notes parenthetically that Fly's denial of bloodguilt was registered "Under all the marks of Confusion," signaling the minister's desire to divest his opponent of rationality and thereby deny the possibility of counterargument. To this end, Mather tells Fly, "I am astonished at your stupidity. I cannot understand you. I am sure, you don't understand yourself." Mather was no doubt frustrated at Fly's refusal to admit to murder, given that even if Fly did not swing the axe that fell on Green and Jenkins, he was an accomplice to their murders. Fly's resistance was likely even more frustrating in light of the other pirates' eager acceptance of their part in the crime. Mather reports the rest of his audience as saying simply that "*There was a murder; and whatever* Mitchel *and this Man did, we were aiding and assisting to it. And it is the dreadfullest of all the Things we have to think of.*" The acceptance of one's moral depravity is the beginning of wisdom for Mather, and as such, is an essential step in the process of moving from a state of spiritual rebellion to one of salvation. Fly's refusal to accept personal or corporate responsibility for the murders of Green and Jenkins presents a serious challenge to Mather's attempt to explain away his

crimes in the same manner as he had done in his earlier treatise. There, Mather's authority turned on his ability to identify the root cause of sin in the depravity of the self. Fly's retort that "*It is very strange another should know more of me, than I do of myself. There are False Oathes taken against me*" challenges Mather's authority because it denies Mather's claim to know Fly's true self and thus to know his motivations.[12]

Rebuffed in his first attempt to incorporate Fly into his existing understanding of piracy by getting the pirate to accept the fundamental charge of guilt necessary for genuine repentance and conversion, Mather reroutes his argument through the doctrine of original sin. The "*Root* of all your *Wickedness*," he argues, originates in "The sin of your *First Parents* in eating the *Forbidden Fruit*." "From hence," Mather claims, "there is derived unto you a *Corruption* that is the very *Image of Satan*," such that "All the faculties of your souls are depraved and enfeebled in this Corruption." The result is a "*Heart* that is *desperately wicked*; an *Heart fully set in you to do evil*." The corruption of the will that takes place through original sin leads the sinner into a state of spiritual captivity to Satan that manifests itself in a predisposition toward all manner of evil. Mather cements this point when he asks the pirates which sins in their former lives weighed most heavily upon them. Fly answers "*My horrid Swearing and Cursing*," Cole answers "*My Swearing and Cursing, and my Drunkenness*," and Greenville answers the same.[13]

By connecting the doctrines of original sin and total depravity with the specific sins of oath-swearing, cursing, and drinking, Mather creates a narrative that becomes what Daniel Cohen describes as a "coherent chain of events" whereby lesser sins lead to greater ones. The doctrine of original sin was central to Puritan ideas about crime and criminality for the obvious reason that it provided a rationale for the existence of sin in a world where God was supposed to reign supreme. It also provided an incipient narrative framework for comprehending the actions of specific criminals by suggesting a "natural progression" from lesser to more serious crimes during the course of a criminal's life. Drunkenness, for example, was a favorite target for Puritan ministers such as Mather, because it signified the compromise of one's reason and discernment, thus opening a natural path to a wide range of more consequential crimes like mutiny, murder, and piracy. Getting the pirates to admit to the sins of swearing, cursing, and drinking was important for Mather, because it implied their shared guilt in the sin of their first parents and their moral depravity. Admissions of sin rendered criminals potential converts and thus potential members in the community of visible saints.[14]

Fly's acceptance of Mather's arguments about original sin and the progression of sin from lesser to greater forms is also significant because it signals his willingness to engage Mather on theological grounds. It is certainly true that Mather and Fly had very different backgrounds and thus different perspectives on the structures of economic and social power that impinged upon the specific debates about Fly's culpability for murder and acts of piracy in *Vial*. But it would be a mistake to think that for Mather anyone's experience could fall totally outside the reach of providence, and it would be equally mistaken to conclude on the basis of their different social positions that Fly was incapable of imagining his life within the horizon of Puritan religious experience. The debate between Mather and Fly about the applicability of the commandments to love one's neighbor and to treat others as one wished to be treated to Fly's case illustrates this point, for it shows that Mather was capable of maintaining a belief in the doctrine of providence writ large while acknowledging that God's will might only be dimly reflected in the current form of New England society. It shows as well that Fly understood Puritan theology as capable of generating meaningful social reform that reached beyond the terrestrial bounds of New England into the Atlantic world.

Mather introduces these New Testament principles into his diagnosis of the pirates' spiritual condition when he tells them that their "Robberies and Piracies" were born out of an "Immoderate, Inordinate, Irregular Desire of *Worldly Possessions*" and a "*Hatred* of [their] *Brother*" which led them to murder their captain and first mate and thereby threaten the safety and welfare of the public. He then argues that the fruits of genuine repentance will include a "Disposition full of *Benignity*," a "Hearty *Love* to your Neighbour," and a desire to "*Wish well* to every one, whose *Welfare*, is Consistent with the public Safety." Mather is certainly referring here to the departed Green and Jenkins, though the implication that Fly should also wish well to him, to the man who sentenced him to death, and to his executioner would not have been lost on Fly. Knowing that Fly cited "*Bad Usage*" as the reason for the original mutiny, Mather presses him on this point and asks him if there is anyone in the world whom he wishes ill. His response is candid if not entirely endearing to Mather: "*Yes; There is one Man, that I don't, and I can't wish well to! It is a Vain Thing to ly, if I should say, that I forgive that Man, and that I wish him well, I should ly against my Conscience and add Sin to Sin*." Fly's refusal to wish his former captain well stands in the way of his potential salvation for Mather, who urges Fly to "part with *all Sin*" by forgiving Green for whatever base usage he may have put Fly and the rest of his crew to. Fly's response is uncompromising:

"*I cannot Forgive that Man*," he says, adding "*I won't dy with a Lye in my mouth*."[15]

Mather is predictably unimpressed by Fly's theological disputation on this point. He reduces to nonsensicality Fly's argument that it would be wrong to add the sin of lying to the sin of hating his brother when he tells Fly "Thou talkest like a Madman." Mather then turns his attention to the other pirates, who accept his counsel and state that they "*heartily forgive all this world; and wish well to every Man*." This exchange is significant, because it demonstrates that Mather and Fly shared what Daniel A. Cohen has called a "common language of moral reference."[16] That language centers on the concepts of empathy and equality is implicit in the New Testament principles invoked by Mather. In an effort to reincorporate Fly into the ritual process of conversion instigated by his discourse on original sin, Mather ends his first conference with the pirates by instructing them to review some devotional material that he has left for them. He mentions one volume in particular, *The Converted Sinner*, which he notes was "occasion'd by the last Predecessors you had in the state and place you are now brought into." At this point, Fly engages Mather again, with what must have been a shocking claim: "*I read that Book before ever I was brought hither!*"[17]

That Fly had already read Mather's instructions in piety laid out in *The Converted Sinner* sheds important light on the theological dispute that Fly had with Mather in *Vial* about loving one's neighbor and treating others kindly. First, Fly's reading of Mather's earlier text suggests that the pirate was deeply interested in the intersection between Mather's understanding of piety and issues of social justice. Second, Fly's remark suggests a deficiency in Mather's understanding of piracy as a spiritual condition articulated in *The Converted Sinner*, which glosses over the question of the treatment of maritime workers in its desire to win assent to the basic proposition that piracy originates not from any well-founded concern with the treatment or pay of workers, but from a sick will operating in bondage to Satan. Despite his success with the pirates in *The Converted Sinner* and with Fly's comrades, Mather's inability to gain traction with Fly stems from his inability to grasp the implications of New Testament ethics for captains and masters of maritime workers.

Fly well knew Mather's arguments in *The Converted Sinner* about the need for a new heart and a new mind before he rejected Mather's plea to forgive Green during their first conference. He likewise knew that Mather understood the hardness of heart exhibited by his refusal to forgive Green as a sign that God had not extended him the prevenient grace necessary to

enlighten the understanding and sanctify the will.[18] When Mather asserted that Fly spoke "like a Madman," he was expressing his belief that God had enlightened the other pirates but not Fly, and Fly clearly knew this, as the need for prevenient grace is one of the strongest themes in the execution sermon entitled "A Repenting Ephraim" that was included in *The Converted Sinner*. Thus, when Fly objected that he could not fake forgiveness and add the sin of deceit to that of hatred because Green had done something unforgivable, Fly was entering into an intertextual theological debate about sin and crime with Mather and attempting to complicate that debate by drawing attention to mitigating circumstances that he believed needed to be addressed.

Fly discusses those circumstances at greater length during the second conference between Mather and the pirates. Mather prods Fly specifically about his disposition in order to see if he has come around, but Fly refuses to budge. He tells Mather that "*'Tis a Vain Thing to dissemble*" and that he has not and will not forgive Green. But his objection becomes at once more political and more deeply theological during this exchange than it was during the first conference. Mather accuses Fly of "Criminal and prodigious *Nonsence*," but he clearly senses that Fly is interested in the broader implications of Green's misconduct, which suggests that the maritime labor system is fundamentally unjust, for Mather follows his opening line of questions about Fly's forgiveness of Green with a question about politics: "And I pray what, have you to say of the Government?" Fly's response – "*GOD Reward them according to their Deserts*" – makes clear his conviction that the maritime world inhabited by sailors and the terrestrial world inhabited by Mather are the same world, united by the concept of providence. Fly charges Mather with hypocrisy by suggesting that Mather has applied the concept of justice partially and unevenly in charging Fly with wrongdoing while ignoring Green's culpability in inciting the original mutiny that led to Fly's commission of murder and piracy. When Mather revisits the topic of Fly's bloodguilt, Fly responds "*I can't Charge myself, – I shan't own myself Guilty of any Murder, – Our Captain and his Mate used us Barbarously. We poor Men can't have Justice done us. There is nothing said to our Commanders, let them never so much abuse us, and use us like Dogs*."[19] Fly's larger point is important: it is unjust that he be subject to capital punishment for spearheading a rebellion that led to murder when captains and officers are allowed to treat common sailors like animals without fear of repercussion. In making this point, Fly suggests to Mather that he should direct more of his attention to the social realities of life at sea and that he should account more fully for the role that the mistreatment of

maritime workers plays in leading seamen such as himself toward a life of crime.

Fly pushes this argument even further during his scaffold speech. Instead of playing the penitent, as was customary for criminals at public executions, Fly chose to issue a threat to Mather and the throng of eager onlookers, saying that "*he would advise the Masters of Vessels to carry it well to their Men, lest they should be put upon doing as he had done*."[20] Fly's threat embodies the subversive potential of the scaffold speech. His promise that others would rise in his place so long as wicked captains went unchecked by religious and civil authorities challenges civil and ecclesiastical authority by forcing the audience to confront the hypocrisy of a system that executes pirates but fails to prosecute captains who abuse their subordinates.[21] What has gone unnoticed in scholarly readings of Fly's scaffold speech is the way in which his threat challenges the very logic of containment and subversion that has governed the critical analysis of the politics of piracy. For Fly, what was needed was not the overthrow of the Puritan theocratic order, but a more genuine expression of its ethical principles in the spheres of maritime labor and trade.

Despite his vociferous protestations during their dialogues, Mather ultimately cedes this point to Fly in the closing pages of *Vial*. In "Wisdom in the Latter End," Mather roundly condemns sailors who resort to piracy and promises them divine retribution, but he also condemns cruel and negligent masters. The passage bears quoting at length for what it says about Mather's real views on the legitimacy of Fly's argument about the social causes of piracy:

> But while I am addressing the poor *Sailors*, and beseeching them, that they would not let the *Devil*, who is the worst of *Masters*, enslave them . . . I would presume upon an Address to the *Masters* of our Vessels, that they would not be too like the *Devil* in their *Barbarous Usage* of the *Men* that are under them, and lay them under *Temptations* to do *Desperate Things*. We allow, *Syrs*, That you must be *Commanders* aboard, and you must keep a *strict Hand* over your Men; and you may, *as times go*, to often have occasions for *Severities*; But still, there must be no room for *Barbarities* . . . The *Men* must be used as *Rational Creatures*. . . They are your *Brethren*. And you would certainly find it so, that with a *Merciful Usage* of your *Men*, if you wisely maintain the Exercises of PIETY aboard your Vessels, and be yourselves bright *Examples* of it, your GOD, and the *Conscience* that speaks from and for Him in your *Men*, would be on *your side*, and your *Authority* would be sufficiently established.[22]

Mather does not exculpate Fly for the murders of Green and Jenkins, nor does he excuse Fly's acts of piracy. But he does grant Fly's point that

masters are often too severe in the exercise of their authority and that their severity is not just politically unwise, but also wicked. Thus, Fly's claim that bad usage pushes sailors to do desperate things is neither ludicrous nor satanic, as has been claimed.[23] Rather, Fly's argument reveals the shortcomings of Mather's views on the etiology of crime and the moral culpability of criminals like himself. Mather ultimately determines that pirates and ships' captains are both in need of repentance, and he argues, in ultimate agreement with Fly, that the proper response to the threat of piracy is for captains to do justice to sailors, lest sailors turn pirate and choose to exercise their own notoriously cruel form of retributive justice.[24]

If the lesson of the case of William Fly for Mather's historical audience was that ships' captains had a moral responsibility to treat sailors like human beings made in the image of God, the lesson for the contemporary audience of Mather's anti-piracy writings is that the Atlantic world occupied a space in the Puritan imaginary that was radically contiguous with the terrestrial sphere in which Puritans pursued their errand. The link between these two spaces was a conception of piety capacious enough to encompass the very different quotidian spaces of Mather's and Fly's daily lives.

Mather had been working for decades at incorporating the burgeoning world of oceanic trade into his understanding of the New England errand by the time he wrote *Vial*. Mather's 1697 *Pietas in Patriam*, dedicated to the life of mariner, soldier, and treasure-hunter William Phips, shows that twenty years before the publication of *Vial*, Mather had begun to think about the Atlantic world as a place where God's providential designs for New England could be worked out. Teresa Toulouse argues that Phips's life taught Mather that the world of oceanic trade could serve "larger moral, even evangelical, aims" if populated by pious Christians. In *Pietas in Patriam*, Mather develops a concern with what Toulouse calls "Atlantic Pietism" that obtains in later writings.[25] Three years after the publication of *Pietas*, Mather argues in *The Religious Mariner* that Protestant nations should view trade and navigation as a means of evangelism, thereby giving Protestant mariners a prominent role in combating the spread of Catholicism and in evangelizing the globe.[26] The explosion of North Atlantic piracy during the intervening decades between these publications and *Vial* had forced New England ministers into what Steven J. Pitt has described as a "more intimate, albeit highly complicated, relationship with sailors," characterized by the gradual recognition of the injustices they suffered and the need for maritime labor reform.[27] By the time Mather wrote *Vial*, he had come to see that even criminal figures like pirates were

integral to the Puritan errand because they served as an index of captains' and masters' practice of piety. Mather thus inscribes activities typically associated with secularization – oceanic travel and trade particularly – within a providentialist and Pietistic framework. In doing so, he demonstrates the adaptive resilience of Puritan theology, which is able to accommodate emergent social and political forms of oceanic modernity.

Mather's final exhortation in "Wisdom in the Latter End" further evidences his compassion toward maritime workers, as well as his abiding interest in the question of how maritime subjects could further the broad evangelical aims of Puritanism through the exercise of piety in the domains of oceanic travel and trade. Mather understands the crisis represented by Fly's rebellion not as that of a secular, commercial world order ushering in the demise of the Puritan theocracy, but rather as the latest manifestation of the cycle of declension and renewal that lay at the heart of the Puritan understanding of history. He found in Fly a most unlikely ally for reimagining Puritanism's relationship to global modernity through the articulation of a universalist ethic of social justice. The most pressing question for both Mather and Fly, then, was not how secular modernity could usher in a more progressive politics and ethics, but rather the question of what it would look like for God to reign sovereign over both land and sea.

Notes

1. These include *Instructions to the Living, from the Condition of the Dead* (1717), *Useful Remarks: An Essay Upon Remarkables in the Way of Wicked Men* (1723), *The Converted Sinner* (1724), and *The Vial Poured Out upon the Sea* (1726).
2. The most influential account of the conflict between Mather and Fly has been the opening chapter of Marcus Rediker's *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004).
3. On the conflict between Mather and Fly, see Rediker, *Villains*, 1–2. On sailors' demands for social justice, see *Villains*, ch. 5.
4. Rediker, *Villains*, 5.
5. Mather, *Converted*; see "The Occasion."
6. On Mather's understanding of the conversion process, see Mitchell Breitwieser, *Cotton Mather and Benjamin Franklin: The Price of Representative Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 28.
7. Mather, *Converted*, 6.
8. Mather, *Converted*, 46.
9. Karen Halttunen, *Murder Most Foul: The Killer and the American Gothic Imaginary* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 26.
10. Halttunen, *Murder Most Foul*, 26–28.
11. Mather, *Vial*, 8.

12. Mather, *Vial*, 8–9.
13. Mather, *Vial*, 9, 11.
14. On the centrality of the doctrine of original sin to Puritan understandings of crime and criminality, see Daniel A. Cohen, *Pillars of Salt and Monuments of Grace: New England Crime Literature and the Origins of American Popular Culture, 1674–1860* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006), 83–85. On the concept of visible sainthood, see Edmund Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965).
15. Mather, *Vial*, 15–16.
16. Cohen, *Pillars of Salt*, 68.
17. Mather, *Vial*, 16–17.
18. Mather, *Converted*, 14.
19. Mather, *Vial*, 21.
20. Mather, *Vial*, 48.
21. On the subversive potential of the scaffold speech in the case of pirate executions, see Claire Jowitt, *The Culture of Piracy, 1580–1630: The Culture of Seaborne Crime* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010), 20–25. On execution as spectacle more broadly, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1977), 34.
22. Mather, *Vial*, 45.
23. See Daniel E. Williams "Puritans and Pirates: A Confrontation between Cotton Mather and William Fly in 1726." *Early American Literature* 22.3 (1987): 233–251, 243.
24. See Rediker, *Villains*, 93.
25. See Teresa Toulouse, "'Reader . . . Behold One Raised by God': Religious Transformations in Cotton Mather's *Pietas in Patriam: The Life of His Excellency Sir William Phips, Knt.*," in *Religious Transformations in the Early Modern Americas*, ed. Stephanie Kirk and Sarah Rivett (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014): 231–251, at 233, 250. On the connection between Mather and Pietism, see Richard F. Lovelace, *The American Pietism of Cotton Mather: Origins of an American Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Christian University Press, 1979), 32–35.
26. Cotton Mather, *The Religious Mariner: A Brief Discourse Tending to Direct the Course of Sea-men, In those Points of Religion, Which may bring them to the Port of Eternal Happiness* (Boston, 1700). See "Preface."
27. Steven J. Pitt, "Cotton Mather and Boston's 'Seafaring Tribe,'" *The New England Quarterly* 85.2 (2012): 222–252, at 252.

PART III

Puritan Afterlives

CHAPTER 10

Puritan Acts and Monuments

Jonathan Beecher Field

What can we learn about Puritanism by looking at monuments to Puritans? For a town with a reputation for ancestor worship, Boston has surprisingly few memorials to its Puritan Founders. There is a statue of John Winthrop in the Back Bay and a statue of John Endicott in the Fenway. However, noted Puritan antagonists Anne Hutchinson and Mary Dyer both enjoy large memorials in prime locations on the grounds of the Massachusetts State House – impressive for women exiled and executed, respectively, by the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Hutchinson's ally, Henry Vane, Jr., has a statue just inside the Boston Public Library. Thus, there are more statues of Antinomians in Boston than of their orthodox antagonists, as of this writing.

For scholars interested in American Puritanism, public statuary is not a popular resource. The majority of scholarship on these monuments in Boston appears in books and pamphlets surveying Boston statuary at large.[1] However, by considering these statues as a material archive, in Boston and elsewhere, we can see patterns of memory and forgetting that exist in tension with the printed historiographic archive. Indeed, statues of Puritans located well beyond New England's borders may have as much to tell us about the legacy of Puritanism in the United States as those located in the city founded by Puritans. Considering public monuments from the late Victorian era to the early Cold War years may seem like a perverse contribution to a volume concerned with the New Puritan Studies. However, this chapter aims to read this archive against a more familiar print archive to reveal ways that the narrative of this settlement has always been unsettled.

Variations of an iconic Puritan figure are prominently displayed in New York and in Philadelphia, and replicas of Saint-Gaudens's forbidding Puritan preacher are scattered across the United States. No such likenesses appear in an outdoor public place in Boston. With the exception of Dyer's 1959 monument, the statues that constitute this ironic contrast are part of

a broader national phenomenon of "statue mania." As Erika Doss details, "statue mania erupted in the United States from the 1870s to the 1920s," because public monuments offered a way for post-Civil War America to "reimagine what Benedict Anderson terms the 'affective bonds of nationalism.'"[2] This post-Civil War period was not one receptive to the faith or words of the Puritans in Boston's intellectual history, and Boston's citizens found other figures to honor besides the founding generation of ministers. At the same time, on a national scale, the figure of the Puritan offered the fantasy of a single and coherent point of national origin. These statues of iconic Puritan figures offer a way to reimagine and perform the affective bonds of nationalism.

Statues can and do participate in this work of reimagination, but in complicated ways. As Doss points out, the monuments for 9/11 and Vietnam reflect and drive a consensus narrative around those traumatic events for the nation.[3] Statues do not offer any kind of definitive or authoritative narrative of the past, but they do have a powerful ability to shape those narratives. As we will see, public monuments honoring the first generation of English settlers in New England reflect local and national ambivalences about the value and meaning of these men and women to subsequent generations of Americans. A survey of these monuments reveals that there was a nineteenth- and twentieth-century historiographic conversation about seventeenth-century New England carried out in granite and bronze, and in presences and absences. This monumental conversation sometimes anticipates, sometimes complicates, sometimes contradicts, and sometimes echoes the conversations about this period carried out in ink and paper that are more familiar to scholars of New England Puritanism.

Figurative statues can seem to represent comfortable municipal values – quite often they represent important white men on horseback – but they also can represent dissensus, or at least social change. A statue is a monument to the person it represents, and it can represent a kind of secular canonization. But a statue is also a monument to the people who cause it to be built and dedicated. Many municipal statues can be read as markers of one group or another becoming powerful and legible, and thus able to be represented in the same medium as generals and presidents. A statue honoring an Irish patriot that sits on the Fenway in Boston honors that patriot and his struggle, but it also registers the power of the community who caused it to be built. The Hutchinson and Dyer statues exemplify this pattern. The Hutchinson statue was a register of the political and financial power of women's clubs to place a monument to the most prominent woman of the first generation of English settlement on the

State House lawn. It would be hard to claim the same kind of political agency for Quakers in the late 1950s, but it is notable that the statue's dedication coincides with the 300th anniversary of the martyrdom of Quakers at the hands of the Bay Colony. The most powerful aspect of statues may be their ability to create the illusion of historical consensus out of trauma and turmoil.

Public monuments thus suggest a compulsory municipal consensus history, and they offer an attractive way to rescript a national narrative. At the same time, statues offer a challenge to the familiar temporalities of written Puritan historiography. Recent scholarship in literary history has challenged the implicit dominance of linear chronology in literary history and in classroom teaching.[4] Scholars might construct a linear chronology and put Sacvan Bercovitch next to Perry Miller on a library shelf, and then add Lisa Gordis and Meredith Neuman, and so forth, but such revisionism is very hard to accomplish in granite or bronze. So, for instance, we have a statue of Anne Hutchinson, dedicated in 1922, and in 1937, a young Edmund Morgan writes "The Case Against Anne Hutchinson," rehearsing the reason for her exile as a criminal by the standards of the Bay Colony at the time. But Morgan's scholarship does not put a statue of John Cotton on the State House lawn.[5]

If historiography moves slowly, statues, as a rule, do not move at all. The process of creating a statue commemorating a given figure in a given place is different in every instance, but it involves, almost inevitably, a range of interactions among citizens, politicians, private donors, and others. When these entities succeed in dedicating a statue, we have what amounts to a lay narrative of a given moment in the past, a narrative articulated at the moment a new statue is dedicated. Statues persist as material forms of these moments in public landscapes of the present. Paradoxically, statues also occlude the contested circumstances that may have attended their origin. Statues thus represent not so much a consensus history as a consensus antiquarianism we encounter every day. Paying attention to this consensus, and its iterations over time, reveals a narrative of New England Puritanism in the streets of Boston and beyond that is messier and more contested than the evolving scholarly conversations concerning these figures.

John Winthrop

The oldest of the Puritan statues in Boston is of the Bay Colony's first governor, John Winthrop. The bronze statue, by Richard Saltonstall

Greenough, is a bronze copy of a marble statue Greenough created for Statuary Hall in Washington, DC. The marble version was dedicated in 1876. The bronze version is dated 1873, but was not formally dedicated until 1880. The statue shows Winthrop in an elaborate Elizabethan collar, with a Bible in one hand and a rolled up copy of the Bay Colony's charter in the other. Statuary Hall offered an opportunity for each state of the Union to memorialize prominent figures from its history in the United States Capitol Building. According to the 1864 law, each state of the union was to furnish statues of no more than two distinguished residents.[6]

After much discussion, Winthrop and Samuel Adams emerged as the Bay Colony's two representatives. Some states have chosen to update their representative statues, either out of a sense of uneasiness with the figures originally chosen, or because other, more compelling figures later emerged. For instance, in 2009, Alabama replaced Jabez Lamar Monroe Curry with Helen Keller.[7] Marble Winthrop remains in the Hall of Columns in the Capitol in DC, but his bronze counterpart has had a more peripatetic life in Boston. The bronze was dedicated in 1880, and located in Scollay Square, the current location of Government Center. Its dedication was in honor of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. It stood on a tall pedestal in Scollay Square, at the heart of one of Boston's busiest intersections at that time.[8]

However, the statue was displaced from its original location in Scollay Square due to subway construction in the late 1890s, and it was eventually removed entirely. In 1903, the city of Boston offered the statue to First Church of Boston. Winthrop's statue was reinstalled on the grounds of the First Church in 1903. A fire destroyed the church building in 1968, and the statue was damaged by falling debris. An ambitious rebuilding program required relocating Winthrop again, and now, shorn of his plinth, he perches uneasily on a ledge of the new First Church Building erected in 1972. The statue sits near the entrance to a preschool operated by the First Church of Boston, which is now Unitarian-Universalist. An onlooker could get the impression that the Bay Colony's first governor has been put on time-out by the current leadership of the church he helped to found. This awkward juxtaposition of a memorial honoring Winthrop, a founding parishioner, standing outside a building that now houses a congregation that he would not have understood to be a church indicates the complicated texture produced by intersections of monumental, historical, and institutional narratives. The prevailing historiographic narrative for Massachusetts's churches is declension. The ideals of 1630 become the compromises of 1662, and soon enough we find ourselves with a Protestant

ethic instead of a religion. At the same time, the institution that was the First Church of Boston, celebrated by Edward Johnson and Cotton Mather, understandably sees this evolution in more positive terms:

> First Church is a paradox . . . Yes, we are the oldest church in Boston, established in 1630. Yet after the great church fire of 1968, we built the newest and most innovative church structure in Boston in response. In this sense, we are a living symbol of Unitarian Universalism – sensitive to the past, but not bound by that past into narrow and lifeless creeds. We respect tradition, but we seek religious truth that reveals itself in the future, not the past.[9]

This statement from the First Church about itself on its web page is an artifact somewhere between print historiography (as a brief narrative of the church's history) and the inscription on a sculpture (we might consider this "about" statement as a caption for the building itself). The storyline communicates a simultaneous embrace and disavowal of any Puritan legacy: it retains the name of "First Church," which inevitably invokes this founding generation, even as it dismisses the faith of the people who founded this church as "narrow and lifeless." Winthrop's statue, which found its way to this church by happenstance, mediates between these two narratives. The speech dedicating the marble version of the statue gives a sense of what Winthrop was intended to represent on behalf of Massachusetts, and also possibly why the statue has been treated with less than total veneration in the ensuing years. At its dedication, George F. Hoar elaborates on Winthrop's mode of leadership: "No legions flushed with foreign conquest demanded that he should lead them across the Rubicon to found an empire on the ruins of his country. No milk of the she-wolf mingling with the streams of his blood made him the fit founder of an asylum for a clan of banditti." For Hoar, Winthrop is the most complete embodiment of the Puritan ethos, even as "No other American so nearly resembles Washington."[10] Such a man is an understandable object of veneration by an establishment Yankee politician like Hoar writing in 1876, but given the changing ethnic makeup of the city of Boston in the late nineteenth century, and especially the political ascendancy of Irish Catholics, it is not surprising that Winthrop moved from a location of municipal prominence to one of ecclesiastical obscurity.

John Endecott

Joining Winthrop among orthodox Founders commemorated in stone or bronze is John Endecott. If one were making a pantheon of first-generation

New England settlers, John Endecott would be significant, but not prominent. He was an early settler, part of a small group that settled at Salem before Winthrop's party arrived on the ship *Arbella*. He is perhaps most notable as the inspiration for Hawthorne's short story, "Endicott and the Red Cross," which describes how Endecott mutilated the English flag by removing Saint George's Cross from it, on the grounds that it was a Popish relic.[11] He was active early in his career against Thomas Morton's Merrymount settlement and late in his career against the Quakers. He also allowed the regicides Edward Whaley and William Goffe to escape, in spite of orders from Charles II to apprehend them. It is a solid career for an early Bay Colony Puritan, but hard to rank among theologians such as Cotton, Eliot, and Shepard in terms of historical influence. However, Endecott has a statue, and these other men do not, for a very simple reason: one of Endecott's relatives donated the money for the statue. As the inscription indicates, the statue is a "BEQUEST OF GEORGE AUGUSTUS PEABODY, ESQUIRE, OF DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS."

The timing of the statue is suggestive. Peabody died in 1929, or not long after the Hutchinson statue was dedicated, and just before the Massachusetts Bay Colony tercentenary in 1930. From nearly a hundred years later, it appears as if public opinion was divided between those reluctant to honor the anniversary of a settlement populated by people whose Puritan faith had become a byword for grim, repressive, and joyless tendencies in American culture, and those who felt that even if the Puritans were, indeed, puritanical, their settlement still warranted respect and recognition. H. L. Mencken's repeated use of the word "puritan" to characterize all that was mirthless and prudish in American culture bolstered one camp, while local Yankee civic pride nurtured the other.[12] We see this conflict in a 1930 review essay Samuel Eliot Morison published in the *New England Quarterly* lamenting that while he faces the task of reviewing the three separate biographies of Anne Hutchinson appearing that year, it is

> typical of New England celebrations that in this tercentennial year there should be not a single new life of sainted Founders such as Winthrop, Dudley, Endecott, Wilson, Cotton, Eliot and Shepard – all of whom want modern biographies badly – and three of the lady whom all the sainted Founders excepting Cotton, regarded as an unmitigated nuisance and dangerous serpent in their Puritan Canaan.[13]

While it remains something of a speculation, it seems as if Peabody may have intended the statue of his forebear as a granite rejoinder to the bronze statue of the unmitigated nuisance Hutchinson, dedicated in 1922.

At the same time, it's worth bearing in mind that in this case as well as others, a single person was able to take private funds and use them to create public art on public land. In the intervening years, the process has become more formal. Now the purview of the Boston Art Commission, the process for creating and locating statues involves multiple layers of proposals, a review board, aerial photographs, and comments from abutters. The document outlining the guidelines for simply proposing a new public artwork in Boston runs to eight pages. Even as scholars such as Mike Davis lamented the privatization of public space in the United States during the late twentieth century, privately funded public art has a much longer history.[14]

Henry Vane

Winthrop's rival Henry Vane, Jr., was the next Bostonian of the founding generation to be honored with a statue. It is in the entrance of the Boston Public Library. The statue was funded by Dr. Charles Goddard Weld (1857–1911), a collector of art and a major benefactor of both the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Peabody Essex Museum. The main focus of his collecting was Japanese art, but he provided the funds to purchase the statue of Vane for the library. Library trustee James Freeman Clarke (1810–1888), a Unitarian minister, "admired Vane as a defender of civil liberty and toleration."[15] In the absence of any other date associated with the Vane statue in the Boston Public Library's own *Handbook to the Art and Architecture of the Boston Public Library*, it appears that the Vane statue was part of the library when the McKim building opened in 1895.

Vane enjoys a prominent spot in the entrance of the Boston Public Library. This prominence is magnified by the remarkable absence of other figures from seventeenth-century Boston represented in the library. Vane, an Englishman who spent less than two years in New England, is better known as a regicide who signed Charles I's death warrant. Vane himself was beheaded after the Restoration. He is the only figure from the first wave of English settlement visually represented in the art and architecture of the Boston Public Library building. Winthrop and Eliot are among the hundreds of names of distinguished writers, scientists and statesmen (the names are overwhelmingly male), but it is Vane who gets pride of place. In spite of an institutional connection from these settlers embraced by the nearby Unitarian First Church of Boston, Clarke, the Unitarian minister, favored Vane as a symbol of the resistance to Puritan theocracy embodied by men like Winthrop and Eliot. At the same time, and in keeping with the overwhelmingly male composition of the people recognized in and on the McKim building, Clarke lobbied for

Vane, and not Hutchinson or Dyer. The inscription on Vane's statue does point to an interesting connection to Dyer's memorial. It reads:

SIR HENRY VANE
GOVERNOR OF THE
COLONY OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BAY 1636
BORN 1612 BEHEADED 1662
AND ARDENT DEFENDER OF CIVIL LIBERTY AND
ADVOCATE OF FREE THOUGHT IN RELIGION
HE MAINTAINED THAT GOD, LAW, AND PARLIAMENT ARE
SUPERIOR TO KING

In smaller lettering, the inscription continues:

THIS STATUE WAS PLACED HERE AT THE REQUEST OF
JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE, DD AN HONORED CITIZEN
OF BOSTON WHO NOBLY LABORED FOR THE ABOLITION
OF SLAVERY IN AMERICA

There is no evident connection between Vane and abolition, but the statue of Mary Dyer was also funded by a donor with strong anti-slavery instincts. The connection between Antinomians and abolitionists seems more intuitive than historical – slavery was not yet a significant part of the economy of the Bay Colony in the 1630s, and Samuel Sewall's 1700 *Selling of Joseph* (a pamphlet response to pro-slavery pamphlets by John Saffin and Cotton Mather) marks the first prominent intervention by a Puritan on the question of slavery. However, Vane and Dyer's adherence to progressive movements of their day, not to mention their shared martyrdom, make them compelling to later generations of Boston progressives.

Anne Hutchinson

Vane's associate Anne Hutchinson was the next Puritan settler commemorated in Boston. Anne Hutchinson's statue has enjoyed the stability that her antagonist Winthrop enjoyed in life. The living Anne Hutchinson was harassed and exiled and then re-exiled herself even as Winthrop remained ensconced in Boston, but their memorials show a reversal of fortune. Hutchinson's statue is on the State House lawn, facing Beacon Street, across and slightly down Beacon Street from Saint-Gaudens's Shaw Memorial, the most famous statue in Boston, thanks to Robert Lowell and Matthew Broderick.

If the Winthrop statue suggests an enactment of a familiar founding narrative, Hutchinson's statue tells quite a different story. The statue was sculpted in 1915 and dedicated in 1922, and funded by gifts from the Anne Hutchinson Memorial Association and the State Federation of Women's Clubs. Hutchinson's statue honors the memory of this Antinomian dissident, but it also serves as a kind of monument to a new political agency some women were embracing in the early years of the twentieth century. Anne Hutchinson combines a compelling story of courage with relatively few known details, so her story is one that has been co-opted by her posthumous admirers, claiming her variously as a Quaker, or Transcendentalist, or suffragette *avant la lettre*. In this vein, women's clubs claimed Anne Hutchinson as "America's First Clubwoman." A 1912 *New York Times* article celebrating early American women introduces her this way: "Even in New England there soon arose a woman who was prepared to defy the whole board of Puritan ministers. Ann Hutchinson was the first club woman in America, and she stirred Boston to its foundations." As the article explains, summarizing the recently published "Pioneer Mothers of America," Hutchinson was "intelligent, kindly, charitable, as well as courageous and outspoken[,] . . . with a power of sarcasm and of logical reasoning that picked flaws in the phariseeism, the sanctimonious pretense and hypocrisy that were more or less unconsciously fostered by the theology that these austere, self-justifying men had fashioned from the teachings of the lowly Nazarene." Thus, this narrative explains, "When the club of women began to meet twice a week at Hutchinson's house, the ministers felt it was time to take violent measures."[16] To refer to Hutchinson's conventicles, which did include men, as a "club," involves doing some violence to the definition of the word, but there are salient echoes. Notably, the club movement of the early twentieth century created a space for women to exercise political agency outside of an individual domestic sphere.[17] By virtue of her discussions of sermons, or, more precisely, the objections to her meetings, she was thrust into the public and political conversations of the colony. Hutchinson thus makes a far better forerunner for the twentieth-century clubwoman than other women of her generation. The Hutchinson statue memorializes the emerging political leadership of early twentieth-century women as much as it celebrates women's religious leadership in the seventeenth century.

Founders Memorial

The more generic Founders Memorial offers a more upbeat version of early Massachusetts history than Hutchinson's statue, albeit in a less

prominent location. The Founders Memorial is a relief in the same style as as Augustus Saint-Gaudens's famous Robert Gould Shaw-Massachusetts 54th Memorial. The Shaw Memorial faces the Hutchinson memorial from the other side of Beacon Street, while the Founders Memorial is few hundred yards down Beacon Street, and facing toward the Boston Common. It is an allegorical panel, depicting William Blackstone, one of Boston's first English residents, welcoming John Winthrop's party to the New World. Native Americans, in a crouched position, are situated behind Blackstone. One of the challenges of sculpting figures from the seventeenth century is that often there are no surviving images of the person to be represented. Thus, the "Independent Man" on the dome of the Rhode Island State House represents Roger Williams, but in spirit only. The sculptor of the John Harvard statue in Harvard Yard faced the same challenge. Blackstone was a rather obscure figure, and, as with most people of his day, there is no image that survives. In the absence of a model for Blackstone, the sculptor modeled his features on James Michael Curley, the mayor of Boston. Curley was a legendary – indeed notorious – figure in twentieth century urban politics, an archetype of the city machine politico with a mastery of patronage. He was also a powerful symbol of the political ascendancy of Irish Catholics in the Boston politics.

In effect, the Founders Memorial seems to represent a synthesis of the ethnic pride and the establishment narrative that are manifested in Boston statues like those of Christopher Columbus, Leif Eriksson, and Tadeusz (Thaddeus) Kosciuszko. The obverse of the monument features quotations from the famous Massachusetts leaders John Winthrop, William Bradford, and James Michael Curley himself. The integration of Winthrop and Bradford manifests a longstanding tension in historical memory between Plymouth, the first major English settlement in New England, and Massachusetts, the larger settlement that eventually absorbed Plymouth. Curley's inclusion – or, rather, his insertion of himself into this narrative – reflects the shifting balance of power in Boston politics from Protestant Yankees to Irish Catholics, who dominated Boston political offices in the first half of the twentieth century. A generation earlier, in 1890, the John Boyle O'Reilly Memorial Committee raised funds to honor this Irish patriot who settled in Boston after being exiled from his native country. The impulse of that memorial was to honor O'Reilly, obviously, but also to claim urban space for an Irish American political narrative. Here, instead of demanding space for an Irish legacy, Curley claims his city's founding narrative for himself, and by extension, other Irish Americans.

At the same time, Curley's presence in the Founders Memorial reflects how malleable the Puritan past could be in any future present. There is nothing that could be more overtly ancestor-worshipping than a Founders Memorial, and yet the memorial affirms the stature of a twentieth Irish American politician whose ancestors immigrated from Galway. Curley's ancestors, had they encountered compatriots of the Puritan Founders of Boston, would likely have been at home in Galway when the region was besieged in 1651 to 1652 by Puritans sent there by Oliver Cromwell. Curley's engagement with Boston's Puritan legacy points to the surprisingly complicated ethnic politics of remembering Puritan Boston. If we read statues like those to O'Reilly or Columbus or Kosciuszko as reflections of the pride of one or another group of ethnic Americans, we can read the popularity of Puritan memorials far beyond Boston as a reflection of a different kind of ethnic pride, or an effort to instantiate Puritan Boston as the foundational settlement of a normatively deracinated America.

Mary Dyer

The most recent statue commemorating a figure from seventeenth-century New England is of Mary Dyer. This statue was dedicated in 1959, and was sculpted by Sylvia Shaw Judson, herself a Quaker. This statue is the most prominently situated of any of the statues mentioned here, and it is certainly the most striking from a contemporary aesthetic perspective. Where the earlier statues are more strictly realist, the Dyer statue is quite stylized. The Dyer statue also shows the beginnings of a more formal review process for public statuary in Boston: there was a competition among sculptors to select the winning design under the auspices of the State Art Commission. The earlier statues under review do not seem to have undergone such a formal juried process.

Beyond being a Quaker, Judson was one of the more prominent sculptors represented in Boston statuary. Her "Spirit of Electricity" statue in Chicago is something of a modernist icon, and she is also responsible for the "Bird Girl" statue in Savannah, Georgia. The Dyer statue was made possible by a $12,000 bequest from Zenos Ellis, a non-Quaker who was a descendant of Mary Dyer.[18] Ellis was the son of a prominent Vermont abolitionist, and so we see the same affinity between abolition and Antinomianism evident in the commissioning of Vane's statue. As in the case of Endecott, we also see that monumental commemoration can be a question of having descendants with the means and inclination to do so. As the saying goes, (printed) history is written by the winners. In the case of monumental history, it is written by those with the money and the inclination to build statues.

Dyer also joins Sir Henry Vane as one of the two death-penalty victims memorialized with a Boston statue. Vane, however, died in England at the hands of a restored Stuart monarchy. The worst the Massachusetts Bay Colony did to him was bring him to tears, as legend has it. His statue resides in a nook of the public library. However, Mary Dyer was condemned to death – twice – by the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Her statue stands on the lawn of the building that houses the direct institutional descendant of the body that condemned her to death: the Great and General Court of Massachusetts.

The location of the statue on State House grounds suggests an effort to right a wrong – or at least to apologize for it. The commemoration of a death-sentence victim for something (religious belief) that most reasonable people now find shockingly unjust has strong resonance in mid-twentieth-century Boston. The bequest for the statue dates back to 1944, so Dyer's statue echoes the 1927 executions of Sacco and Vanzetti, enacted by the same court that delivered Dyer's death sentence. The statue's inscription reads:

MARY DYER
QUAKER
WITNESS FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
HANGED ON BOSTON COMMON 1660
"MY LIFE NOT AVAILETH ME
IN COMPARISON TO THE
LIBERTY OF THE TRUTH"

As of this writing, these are the monuments to members of the founding generation extant in Boston proper. There are monuments to John Harvard in Charlestown and Cambridge, but Winthrop, Endicott, Vane, Hutchinson, and Dyer are the individually honored figures from this era, as well as a general monument to the Founders collectively. As we have seen, any number of historic, geographic, or genealogical factors can impinge on the creation or survival of a particular statue, but, taken in sum, it seems as if Boston is wary of celebrating the values of its Founders. Endicott and Winthrop, the two orthodox Founders so honored, were both magistrates; John Cotton, Thomas Shepard, John Wilson, and their ministerial brethren have yet to be thus recognized. Conversely, all three of the monumentalized dissidents of the founding generation are prominent in a New England context because of their religious commitments. If Boston's municipal self-image involves ideas such as freedom and

revolution, it is difficult to square that image with censorious men in big black hats.

Beyond Boston

Ironically, the places to find iconic memorials to an ur-Puritan figure are far from Boston. Just as the absence of these figures in Boston is a function of historical context, so, too, is their presence elsewhere. Close to home, any individual Puritan might carry too much historical baggage, while on a national stage, the Puritans' unimpeachable firstness outweighs these factors. This firstness is both spurious and racist. It is, however, a popular notion.

The evidence for a version of this enduringly coherent national origin emerges in monumental form outside of Boston, and even outside the New England states settled by the Puritans. This narrative is visible in the peculiar career of the statue of Deacon Samuel Chapin, a relatively obscure figure who lived and died in the Puritan outpost of Springfield, Massachusetts. A commission executed by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, the statue was dedicated in Springfield in 1887.[19] After repeated incidents of vandalism, the statue was moved from a busy and crowded spot in the heart of Springfield to a more remote location near the city's new art museum. In this much of the story, there are echoes of the career of Winthrop's statue: A more or less iconic Puritan figure is moved from a position of prominence to relative obscurity. In both of these cases, we might read the displacements of Winthrop and Chapin as evidence of a sense of the declining relevance of men like these to the lives and experiences of an ever more heterogeneous Massachusetts public in the late nineteenth century.

At the same time, however, and as another response to a more heterogeneous United States, we see Saint-Gaudens's statue enjoy another life, beyond New England. In the process of executing the commission, Saint-Gaudens elected to fashion his sculpture of Chapin as an embodiment of a typical Puritan, even shading into parody.[20] Seventeenth-century New England is a visually impoverished era, and writing from more than a hundred years later, it is tautology to assert that an icon is iconic, but *The Puritan*, as the statue came to be known, has all of the familiar features of a stock Puritan figure: broadbrimmed hat with a buckle, a cloak, walking stick, and giant Bible. In a similar gesture a few years earlier, in 1885 the New England Society of New York unveiled *The Pilgrim*, a statue by John

Quincy Adams Ward similar in conception to Saint-Gaudens's. It is in Central Park, on the east side of the park between 72nd and 73rd Streets. The statue shares a hat and walking stick with Saint-Gaudens's but omits the cloak and Bible. The inscription on a statue on the Upper East Side of Manhattan reads:

TO COMMEMORATE THE LANDING
OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS ON
PLYMOUTH ROCK, DECEMBER 21, 1620.

Ironically, Saint-Gaudens's irreverence in producing an almost cartoonish figure rendered it a commercial success. The New England Society of Philadelphia commissioned a slightly reworked version of the Chapin statue in 1903, and placed it in front of Philadelphia's City Hall in 1905. In this iteration, it is titled *The Pilgrim*, and bears a simple inscription:

PILGRIM
PRESENTED TO THE
CITY OF
PHILADELPHIA
BY THE NEW ENGLAND
SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA
1905

The outline of this statue became the de facto logo of most chapters of the New England Society in the early twentieth century.[21] Of more immediate interest to Saint-Gaudens, the bronze statuettes of this sculpture proved popular and lucrative. A 31-inch version sold for between $350 and $500 at outlets that included Tiffany and Company, and today there are also full size plaster copies at the Art Institute of Chicago and Boston's Museum of Fine Arts.[22] In 1920, *The Pilgrim* was relocated to East Fairmount Park, northwest of central Philadelphia.

These iterations aside, there are statues of orthodox Bay Colony Founders in Philadelphia and New York more prominently situated than in Boston itself. In Boston, statues representing opponents of this orthodoxy hold pride of place. This paradox suggests something about the complicated legacy of the Puritan past. On a national scale, the Puritans matter because they were here first (more or less) and represent a coherent, deracinated beginning where a normative white Anglo-Saxon Protestant identity can transcend the ebbs and flows of subsequent waves of immigration. In New York or Philadelphia or Chicago, nuances and details of Antinomian controversies and Half-Way Covenants are subsumed into a forbidding looking man in a big hat who represents a putative communal past.

Statues as Archives

This brief survey of Boston's public commemorations of the city's early inhabitants of Boston indicates that the process of historic memorialization is both political and capricious. Statues of figures from the past address the desires of people in a subsequent present, to the bemusement of people in a subsequent future. As an ironic coda, the most recent monumental intervention in the history of seventeenth-century Boston comes in the form of a statue not of a seventeenth-century minister or magistrate, but of a twentieth-century historian who worked hard to preserve the memory of the founding generation. Samuel Eliot Morison's statue was dedicated in 1982, on the Commonwealth Avenue Mall, at the Exeter Street intersection. It bears the legend SAILOR · HISTORIAN. It was funded by the Henderson Foundation, a private philanthropic organization describing itself as "[s]olely devoted to the enhancement of the physical appearance of the city of Boston and immensely contribut[ing] to an effort of preserving the local cultural and historic values."[23] Consistent with this desire to "preserve the local cultural and historic values," Morison wrote from a very conservative perspective, even by the standards of his day. Wilson, Cotton, and the others might never get their own memorials in bronze or granite, but their historiographic champion has.

Reading statues as an archive against a traditional archive of primary sources and historiography may well be an exercise in reading antiquarianism against history. History, as some historians will tell you, is a question of change over time. A statue is a question of stasis over time. However, these two different relations to temporality suggest that the tension between them can offer new insights. If Boston statues and New England print culture demonstrate different versions of squeamish and uneasy efforts to come to terms with a Puritan heritage on a local level, national representations of this same culture in the form of monuments offer the comfort of a presumably coherent national narrative. It is only appropriate that statues of English expatriates should fare better once they are themselves expatriated from their adopted home.

Notes

1. Allan Forbes and Ralph M. Eastman, *Some Statues of Boston: Reproductions of Some of the Statues for which Boston is Famous, with Information Concerning the Personalities and Events So Memorialized* (Boston, MA: State Street Trust, 1946); Allan Forbes and Ralph M. Eastman, *Other Statues of Boston: Reproductions of Other Statues of Boston as a Sequel to our Brochure of 1946 Entitled "Some Statues of Boston"* (Boston, MA: State Street Trust, 1947); Walter Muir Whitehill, *Boston Statues* (Barre, MA: Barre Publishers, 1970).

2. Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling In America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 20.
3. Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 127–131; 143–147.
4. See Jordan Alexander Stein, "American Literary History and Queer Temporalities," *American Literary History* 24 (2013), 855–869.
5. Edmund Morgan, "The Case against Anne Hutchinson," *New England Quarterly* 10 (1937), 635–649.
6. The Architect of the Capitol, "About the National Statuary Hall Collection" (last updated October, 10, 2012): www.aoc.gov/capitol-hill/national-statuary-hall-collection/about-national-statuary-hall-collection, accessed January 24, 2015.
7. The Architect of the Capitol, "The National Statuary Hall Collection": www.aoc.gov/the-national-statuary-hall-collection, accessed April 1, 2015.
8. Boston Art Commission, "Governor John Winthrop": www.publicartboston.com/content/governor-john-winthrop, accessed January 24, 2015.
9. First Church Boston, "About": www.firstchurchboston.org/about, accessed Jan 25, 2015.
10. George F. Hoar, *Presentation of Statues of John Winthrop and Samuel Adams: Speech of Hon. George F. Hoar, of Massachusetts, in the House of Representatives, December 19, 1876* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1876), 6–7.
11. This name is rendered variously as Endicott/Endecott, thus the difference between the name on the statue and the name in Hawthorne's story.
12. For instance, H.L. Mencken, in his essay "Puritanism as a Literary Force," opines "The Puritan's utter lack of aesthetic sense, his distrust of all romantic emotion, his unmatchable intolerance of opposition, his unbreakable belief in his own bleak and narrow views, his savage cruelty of attack, his lust for relentless and barbarous persecution– these things have put an almost unbearable burden up on the exchange of ideas in the United States, and particularly in that form of it that involves playing with them for mere game's sake." H. L. Mencken, "Puritanism as Literary Force," in *A Book of Prefaces* (New York: Knopf, 1917), 201–202.
13. Samuel Eliot Morison, untitled review essay, *New England Quarterly* 3 (1930), 358.
14. Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New York: Vintage, 1992).
15. Forbes and Eastman, *Other Statues of Boston*, 83.
16. "Splendid Record of Daring among American Women," *New York Times* (July 7, 1912), 53.
17. Kristen Marie Delagard, *Battling Miss Bolsheviki: The Origins of Female Conservatism in the United States* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), usefully discusses the culture of women's clubs in the United States during the early twentieth century.
18. George A. Selleck, "New Mary Dyer Statue Unveiled in Boston," *Friends Journal* 5, xxviii (August 8, 1959), 445.

19. Erika Doss, "Augustus Saint-Gaudens's The Puritan: Founders' Statues, Indian Wars, Contested Public Spaces, and Anger's Memory in Springfield, Massachusetts," *Winterthur Portfolio*, 46, iv (Winter 2013), 238.
20. Doss, "*The Puritan*," 249.
21. Doss, "*The Puritan*," 245.
22. Doss, "The Puritan," 246.
23. The George B. Henderson Foundation, "Logo": http://thehendersonfoundation.com/images/logo.gif, accessed January 26, 2015.

CHAPTER 11

Toward Digital Puritan Studies: Iconoclasm, Child Mortality, and Patterns of Mourning in the Farber Gravestone Collection

Harry Brown

In the last decade, digital archives and new methods for analyzing them have transformed humanities research, including early American studies.[1] One of these archives, the Farber Gravestone Collection, offers a unique opportunity for a new look at the Puritans. The collection contains 14,834 digital images representing more than 9,300 individual stones, ranging in date from the mid-seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century. The compilation of the photographs contained in the collection began with Harriette Merrifield Forbes in the 1920s, continued with Ernest Caulfield in the 1950s, and concluded in the last three decades with Daniel and Jessie Lie Farber, who assembled the vast majority of the images and collaborated with David Rumsey and the American Antiquarian Society to create the digital archive.[2] The metadata accompanying each image include the name of the deceased, the date of death, the location and material composition of the stone, the type of iconography appearing on the stone, and, if known, the identity of the carver. We can search the stones using any of these categories, navigating nearly 10,000 gravesites throughout New England. By joining accessibility, comprehensiveness, and navigability, Farber and Rumsey propose to create new avenues for research, showing us all the stones at once while still affording us the ability to look closely at those stones that seem most representative of the Puritan mind, or most peculiar.[3] Using the Farber Collection, we can revisit previous ideas about Puritan art and poetry, discovering new patterns in the ways Puritans mourned, particularly for children.

Scholars of Puritan gravestones, including Harriette Forbes, Allan Ludwig, James Deetz, and Peter Benes, have mostly neglected gravestone verse, focusing instead on patterns in visual motifs.[4] They have observed a transition from images of mortality to images of resurrection, associating this shift with the widespread revivalism of the period

often called the Great Awakening.[5] While these studies show a relaxation of orthodoxy in Puritan theology and art, a more comprehensive survey of the Farber Collection reveals something more: a close connection between gravestone iconography and verse and, more specifically, a greater frequency of verse epitaphs on children's gravestones between 1650 and 1750, relative to other stones from the same period. In the hands of Puritan stone carvers, these special representations of grief tend to forego the familiar consolation of scripture for more homely symbols of death and regeneration: trees, fruits, flowers, and grain. Produced concurrently with many of the stones in the archive, Anne Bradstreet's and Edward Taylor's child elegies contain parallel images, suggesting that the acute pain of losing a child joined Puritan stone carvers and poets in a shared language of grief that undermined the iconoclastic proscription against metaphor and other poetic adornments. In the broader context of early American studies, discovering this close connection between familiar elegies and a collection of largely unstudied epitaphs represents a new synthesis in our understanding of the Puritan culture of death.

Scholars have traced clear chronological patterns in the distinctive styles of gravestone iconography. Deetz, for instance, shows that the iconic winged death's head predominates in the seventeenth century and crests between 1729 and 1760, years roughly coincident with the Great Awakening, when religious revivalism ushered in new visual styles and the Puritan theology of mourning shifted from its preoccupation with corruption and mortality toward a rhetoric of spiritual ascendance.[6] During these decades of revival, the cherub, with its broad, fleshy face and animated eyes, began to replace its grim antecedent, reaching its peak between 1780 and 1790, when the winged death's head fell out of use almost completely. In the early nineteenth century, the willow and urn eclipsed the cherub, becoming the predominant gravestone icon in nineteenth-century New England.[7] Both Deetz and Farber read this stylistic succession as an index of religious feeling in early New England, a demarcation between the orthodox Calvinism of the seventeenth century and forms of grief more characteristic of the post-Calvinist eighteenth century. In this period, stringent iconoclasm and the doctrine of inherent depravity gave way to the embrace of the soul's immortality found in eighteenth-century expressions of mourning. While Puritan orthodoxy dominated at the pulpit, death's heads dominated in the churchyard. Between 1720 and 1760, however, religious revival invited the individual believer into more personal relation with the divine, a view more

compatible with the cherub and other symbols emphasizing the hope of resurrection over the doom of mortality.[8]

Focusing more closely on epitaphs from the periods before and after this transition in both theology and visual style, we find a thematic and tonal correlation between the type of iconography and the type of verse accompanying the death's heads and cherubs. Around 1750, the general form of inscription changes from "Here Lies the Body of" to "In Memory of" – a rhetorical shift signaling a diminishing Puritan influence, indicated by a new emphasis on the ascent of the soul rather than the corrupted wages of original sin. Earlier stones featuring death's heads more often contain verses reminding the reader of decay and mortality, while later stones, carved after the waning of Puritan orthodoxy, reflect an increasing emphasis on resurrection and immortality.[9] In the Farber Collection, Joseph Bartlett's stone (1703) gives particularly rich expression to orthodox Puritan belief, invoking the Letter to the Hebrews, with its description of the murdered Abel speaking from beyond death:

> THOUSANDS OF YEARS AFTER BLEST ABELL'S FALL
> TWAS SAID OF HIM BEING DEAD HE SPEAKETH YET
> FROM SILENT GRAVE METHINKS I HEAR A CALL
> PRAY FELLOW MORTALL, DON'T YOUR DEATH FORGET
> YOU THAT YOUR EYES CAST ON THIS GRAVE
> KNOW YOU A DYING TIME MUST HAVE[10]

James Baily's stone (1715) offers a terse memento mori, speaking plainly for all of the dead:

> AS YOU ARE
> SOE WEARE WE
> BUT AS WE ARE
> YOU SHALL BE[11]

Bartlett's and Bailey's stones are typical of the earlier era. By contrast, Alexander Peronneau's stone (1747) captures the hopeful spirit of the Great Awakening in a lilting quatrain:

> In Faith he Dy'd, in Dust he lies
> But Faith foresees that Dust shall rise
> When JESUS calls while Hope Assumes
> And boasts her joy among the Tombs.[12]

While Ludwig, Deetz, and Farber have established that visual styles on New England gravestones changed during the religious revivals of the first half of the eighteenth century, a survey of the Farber Collection reveals a previously undetected connection between gravestone symbols and gravestone verse. The epitaphs in the archive manifest the same thematic shift that the iconography does, with verses on mortality gradually supplanted by verses on resurrection.

Moving from a comprehensive to a more detailed view, we can narrow our focus to the crucial period around 1750, when this ideological and aesthetic shift took place. The sample of stones carved by the Worcesters, a family working in Harvard, Massachusetts, between 1728 and 1784, prove to be particularly useful in tracing interrelated visual and poetic styles. The collection contains sixty-four images of stones carved by Jonathan Worcester (1707–1754), representing forty-eight individual stones. Worcester, we also find, carved stones for the graves of three of his own young children, including two young sons and a daughter. The dates on Jonathan's stones range from 1728 to 1754, suggesting that he worked until his death at the age of forty-six. Jonathan's work, produced earlier in the eighteenth century, appears to embody Puritan orthodoxy. All forty-eight stones contain stylized teardrop death's heads, characteristic of the visual style predominant before the period of religious revival. Only one of the stones contains an epitaph: the succinct biblical verse, "man knoweth not his time," on the stone of Daniel Campbell (1744). Jonathan's own stone, carved by his son, Moses (1739–1784), contains the stock gravestone verse:

> Dear friends for me pray do not weep
> I am not dead but here do sleep
> And here indeed I must remain
> Till Christ shall raise me up again.[13]

The collection contains eighty-three images of forty-eight stones carved by Moses Worcester, including those of his father, his mother, two brothers, and a sister-in-law. The dates on the stones carved by Moses range from 1751 to 1784, indicating that he worked from his apprenticeship at the age of twelve until his death at the age of forty-five. As one generation of carver gave way to the next in the Worcester workshop during the pivotal period around 1750, traditional Puritan values gave way to revivalism, and the iconography of mourning changed. Of Moses's forty-eight stones in the collection, produced later in the eighteenth century, eighteen contain teardrop death's heads and thirty contain cherubs. Seven of the stones contain verse, and all those containing verse, except his father's, also feature

cherubs. Within the sample of Jonathan's and Moses' work, teardrop death's heads appear on stones carved between 1751 and 1766, cherubs appear on stones carved between 1756 and 1784, and the two motifs overlap between 1756 and 1766. In the collection of stones produced during this decade, we witness in Moses Worcester's work the gradual metamorphosis of the teardrop death's head into the cherub. An interesting series of stones carved between 1755 and 1766 contain teardrop death's heads and cherubs, as well as intermediate designs, such as strange animated teardrops with flesh and hair but without cherub's wings.

The Worcester stones offer a close look at the crucial transition toward revival, allowing us to correlate changing theology with the emergence of a new visual style, as Ludwig, Deetz, and Farber have shown, and with a new proliferation of gravestone poetry. The trend visible in the Worcester sample holds throughout the entire Farber Collection. In 1,919 stones in the archive containing verse, only 109 (6 percent) were inscribed between 1650 and 1749, and 1,810 (94 percent) were inscribed between 1750 and 1850, showing that the vast majority of gravestone verse in New England did not appear until after 1750, in the wake of religious revival.[14] With the comprehensive vantage point provided by the archive, we can see that the development of early New England stone carving had interrelated visual and literary dimensions, and we can trace a correspondence between religious revival, the transformation of visual styles, and a new flourishing of gravestone poetry.

What can we learn from taking a closer look at the rare stones containing verse and produced during the earlier Puritan period, for which no previous studies account? Of the relatively small sample of 109 stones with verse carved before 1750, 33 percent contain biblical verses, with the majority of those invoking Psalm 112:6 ("the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance") and Revelation 14:13 ("Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord"); 27 percent contain reminders of mortality; 17 percent contain biographical verses commemorating important men (pastors, elders, teachers, merchants, or physicians) and virtuous women (wives and mothers); 14 percent contain hopeful verses on resurrection; 7 percent (only eight stones) use metaphor; and the remaining 2 percent (two stones) contain iconoclastic verses (that is, poetry condemning the use of poetry on gravestones; we will return to these shortly). Three of the eight stones using metaphor evoke images of trees or flowers, three use structural metaphors (a house, a parliament, and a school), and two use metaphors of wings or flight. More significant, perhaps, six of these eight stones, exceptional for their use of metaphor in an era of Puritan iconoclasm, mark children's graves, pointing to a relation between the use of metaphor and child mortality.

The three stones from the period before 1750 bearing images of trees and flowers, symbols of both transience and regeneration, provide the most interesting clue in the archive that the Puritans had a special symbolic register for the mourning of children. The stone of two-year-old Elizabeth Adams, who died in 1689 in the frontier village of Sherborn, Massachusetts, contains one of the most poignant epitaphs in the collection:

> Her body was the first
> grain sown in this ground.[15]

The stone of Anna Russel, who died with her baby in childbirth in 1730, emphasizes the hope of resurrection with the image of a fruit tree:

> Beneath this Marble Stone doth Lye
> Two Subjects of Death's Tyranny
> The Mother who in this Close Tomb
> Sleeps with the Issue of her womb
> Here Death deals Cruely you see
> Who with the fruit cuts down the tree
> Yet is his Malice all in vain
> For Tree and Fruit shall Spring again.[16]

The stone of two-year-old Annah Southmayd, who died in 1733, conjures a similar image of a plant harvested and a seed sown:

> Under these clods of clay
> and dust doth lye:
> A pleasant plant
> gone to Eternity.[17]

These unusual early stones bearing pastoral metaphors – only 3 in 9,300 – reveal that, while the Puritans used metaphors in gravestone verse only rarely, they seemed more ready to set aside their iconoclasm in order to adorn children's graves.

As expressions of early American poetry, however, stones such as those of Elizabeth Adams, Anna Russel, and Annah Southmayd have been overlooked by scholars, who have focused almost exclusively on Puritan gravestones as a visual medium.[18] With their subtle synthesis of visual iconography and figurative language, however, the stones bear a close relation to Puritan elegies, seeking to render the invisible world visible by figuring mortality and resurrection as a tree or a flower. Much as Puritan elegists do, the stone carvers used these symbols as a means of mediating between the known and the unknown. This shared symbolic register of epitaphs and elegies allows us to form a larger picture of the literary and religious milieu of the Puritans.

Scholars have demonstrated that Puritan elegies serve as a kind of liturgy that allowed those who read or heard them to participate in a shared myth of resurrection. For the Puritans, poetry acts as a ritual incantation, giving voice to grief but also providing the reassurance of faith and new life. Through continual repetition of these reassuring "scripts," death becomes crystallized into a liturgical formula.[19] In similar fashion, a variation of these rhyming couplets, appearing twelve times among the 1,919 stones with verse epitaphs (including Jonathan Worcester's), offers an incantatory promise of immortality in the face of death:

> Dear friends for me pray do not weep
> I am not dead but here do sleep
> Within this solid lump of clay
> Until the resurrection day
> And here indeed I must remain
> Till Christ shall raise me up again.

The most common verse epitaph in the Farber Collection contains a ubiquitous reminder of mortality commonly parodied as the quintessential expression of Puritan gloom:

> Behold and see as you pass by
> As you are now so once was I
> As I am now so you must be
> Prepare for death and follow me.

It appears on 103 stones in the collection, more than 5 percent of all the stones bearing verse. We find it in use for more than a century, between 1715 and 1826. Those who repeatedly carved these words sought to administer an automatic anodyne in the same way that Puritan elegies did. The ritual repetition of gravestone verses on different stones, in different times and places, forms a persistent undertone in Puritan writing, a hushed prayer inscribed in stone.

Because the poetry of mourning, in print and stone, served this essential ritual purpose, Puritans hesitated to trifle with formal experiments, much as they hesitated to trifle with the Psalms as they cast them in common meter in the *Bay Psalm Book*, which bears the dictum, "God's altar needs not our pollishings." Even Michael Wigglesworth, a poet in an age suspicious of poetry, rejected as "Blasphemy" and "Heathenish Impiety" the kind of literary adornment found in formal elegy, like that of Milton's "Lycidas," charging that it pushed aside Jehovah to make way for Venus and Jove. From the Puritans' perspective, art could only diminish death.[20]

Some of the Puritan gravestones catalogued in the Farber Collection manifest the same literary iconoclasm that we find in the *Bay Psalm Book* and in Wigglesworth's poetics, expressing familiar doubt about the capacity for words to apprehend the mysteries of death and the divine. A stone from 1701 attempts to draw a lesson from the accidental death of the two-year-old Aaron Bowers, killed by a falling "stock of boards":

> Parents dear your idols
> all take down
> lest God should still
> upon you frown.[21]

The stone of Ephraim Huit (1644), the earliest and perhaps most ironic in the collection, reads:

> Who when he lived we drew our vitall breath
> who when he died his dying was our death
> who was the stay of State the Churches staff
> Alas the times forbid an epitaph.[22]

Another early stone (c. 1710), bearing no name or date, likewise offers a memorial verse that disdains memorial verse:

> He thats here interred needs no versifying
> a Vertuous life will keep ye name from dying
> he'll live though poets cease their scribling
> when yea this stone shall mouldred be bye time.[23]

These three stones raised from the archive provide a particularly lucid and paradoxical expression of Puritan iconoclasm: poetry against poetry.

In times that "forbid an epitaph" and looked suspiciously on allusion and metaphor, the 109 stones created prior to the religious revival – stones that feature rather than forbid an epitaph – prompt us to reconsider our assumptions about Puritan iconoclasm. More specifically, they allow us to draw Puritan gravestones into relationship with Puritan elegies in a common literary context that expands and synthesizes our understanding of the Puritan culture of dying, especially with regard to children.[24] For example, Anne Bradstreet's elegies for her grandchildren, published in the second edition of *The Tenth Muse* (1678), contain the same metaphors that appear on the rare stones carved before 1750 containing figurative language. Like those stones, Bradstreet's elegies use metaphor to give meaning to the deaths of young children, events that tested even the strongest believers. Using trees, fruit, and flowers, Bradstreet's elegies, read alongside the stones, point to a common language of mourning that

transcended genre and appeared both in both poetry books and gravestone epitaphs.

In all three of these poems, Bradstreet uses pastoral metaphors to represent the deaths of her grandchildren. For her one-year-old granddaughter Elizabeth, who died in 1665, she writes:

> By nature trees do rot when they are grown,
> And plums and apples thoroughly ripe do fall,
> And corn and grass are in their seasons mown,
> And time brings down what is both strong and tall.
> But plants new set to be eradicate,
> And buds new blown to have so short a date,
> Is by His hand alone that guides nature and fate.[25]

For her three-year-old granddaughter and namesake, Anne, who died in 1669, she writes:

> I knew she was but as a withering flower,
> That's here today, perhaps gone in an hour;
> . . .
> Farewell dear child, thou ne'er shall come to me,
> But yet a while and I shall go to thee;
> Meantime my throbbing heart's cheered up with this:
> Thou with thy savior art in endless bliss.[26]

Bradstreet seems to take solace in these ritual words, through the repeated pastoral images of fallen apples, mown grass, and clipped buds, prematurely gone but containing the promise of return in a new season. The comfort that Bradstreet seeks in these images of growth, death, and regeneration provide some explanation for the compulsive repetition of these visual motifs on the gravestones in the Farber Collection. The archive contains ninety-six stones with epitaphs evoking images of trees, fruit, or flowers, and twenty-seven of these (28 percent) adorn the graves of children, including those of Elizabeth Adams, Anna Russel, and Annah Southmayd, from the period before 1750. This correlation between the young age of the deceased and the type of imagery used in both the visual motifs and verses adorning the stones suggests that these metaphors often served specifically to mourn the death of a child.

As a poet, Bradstreet shares with these stones this common language of loss. While she appears to allude to Shakespeare's Sonnet 18 ("Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?") in her elegy for Elizabeth, her tone does not match the irony of Shakespeare's poem, which elevates the beauty of the sonnet above that of its subject. More likely, Bradstreet draws her

imagery from the churchyard, where she can find in abundance blasted buds with "too short a date." In fact, this abundance of loss, culminating in the death of her one-month-old grandson Simon in 1669, tests Bradstreet's faith more sternly. The edifice of ritual language seems to crack under the cumulative burden of three deaths, three burials, three clipped flowers:

> No sooner came, but gone, and fall'n asleep.
> Acquaintance short, yet parting caused us weep;
> Three flowers, two scarcely blown, the last i' th' bud,
> Cropped by the Almighty's hand; yet He is good.
> With dreadful awe before him let's be mute,
> Such was his will, buy why, let's not dispute,
> With humble hearts and mouths put in the dust,
> Let's say he's merciful as well as just.[27]

Weakened by the deaths of Elizabeth and Anne, Bradstreet sounds in her elegy for Simon more perfunctory and less convinced. We hear a note of doubt, of empty compulsion, as she repeats by rote, "let's be mute," "let's not dispute," "Let's say." Her words, "He is good," sound as much an anguished, angry accusation of God as an affirmation of his wisdom.

Edward Taylor's poem, "Upon Wedlock, and Death of Children," makes use of the same metaphor of a flowering tree, expanding it into a complex conceit to relate the growth of his two sons to manhood and the loss of his two daughters in their infancy.

> When in this Knot I planted was, my Stock
> Soon knotted, and a manly flower out brake.
>
> And after it, my branch again did knot,
> Brought out another Flower, its sweet-breathed mate.
> One knot gave tother the tother's place.
> When Chuckling smiles fought in each other's face.[28]

A "glorious hand" crops this second flower, Taylor's elder daughter Elizabeth, and as two branches grow strong, another one, his younger daughter, Abigail, also "got away." Like Bradstreet, Taylor uses the metaphor of a clipped tree to express his own ambivalence toward these losses, first by thanking God for raising Elizabeth to "glory" and then by remembering his "tortures, Vomit, screechings, groans" when Abigail died. He ends, like Bradstreet in her elegy for Simon, with an ambivalent surrender to God's will, left only with the suspect language of metaphor:

> That as I said, I say, take, Lord, they're Thine.
> I piecemeal pass to Glory bright in them.

In joy, may I sweet flowers for glory breed,
Whether thou get'st them green, or lets them seed.[29]

Bradstreet's and Taylor's pained responses, their uneasy and unsatisfied performance of the same kind of ritual mourning that we find on Puritan gravestones, could point to a similar limitation for the ritual metaphors employed by stone carvers. A few of the epitaphs in the collection offer muted evidence of their ultimate failure to console. The stone of seven-year-old Dan Collens (1735), for example, records the grief and weariness of his parents, who, having previously lost two daughters like Taylor, recall the incomprehensible suffering of Job rather than look forward to any promised reunion:

This Lovly pleasant Child
He was our only one
Althou we have buryed three before
Two Daughters and a Son.
God grant us grace with Job to Say,
The Lord doth give and take away.

Like Bradstreet in her elegy for Simon and like Job, the child's parents pray with failing conviction for the consolation that they lack.[30]

Whether expressed as pastoral metaphors of consolation or, less frequently, as repressed difficulty in accepting ritual consolation, this shared language of elegies and epitaphs suggest that they exist as complementary expressions seeking to articulate mourning through metaphor. Stone carvers as well as poets used these images of trees and flowers as ritual means of comprehending the transition of earthly life to heavenly life and the mystery of resurrection. For some, like Wigglesworth, these images verge on the heretical. In this sense, Puritan verse epitaphs containing metaphors, appearing frequently on children's gravestones, represent a popular counterpoetics against the dogma of Puritan iconoclasm.

By surveying the digital archive of early American gravestones contained in the Farber Collection and then searching for broad patterns and for exceptional stones, we gain new insights about Puritan attitudes about art and poetry. We can see, first, that the waning of Puritan orthodoxy in the first half of the eighteenth century coincided with a dramatic proliferation of gravestone poetry, a largely unexplored area of early American culture. Prior to this cultural eruption, we can isolate a small collection of exceptional Puritan stones using pastoral metaphors to frame the grief of losing a child. This suppressed poetics of mourning, linked to the visual iconography appearing on the stones, suggests that Puritan iconoclasm in

gravestone verse eroded not only as an effect of the dissemination of new visual styles, nor even solely as the result of the Great Awakening, but also as the response to the pointed grief of child mortality.

Anyone who studies the Puritans is struck, sooner or later, by the distressing regularity with which they buried their children, a fact manifested in thousands of gravestones throughout New England. Certainly, the frequency of child mortality did not make the loss of children easier to bear, nor did it numb with ritual the hearts of parents and grandparents, as we can see in the elegies of Bradstreet and Taylor. On the contrary, it seems to have pushed even the most devout of Puritans to recognize the limits of their rituals, tearing holes in their liturgies and making the familiar repetitions and reassurances seem, at last, inadequate. As a kind of proscribed language, metaphor fills this gap, not with the baroque or pagan figurations that troubled Wigglesworth, but instead with more homely images that came easier to the Puritans: grain, fruit, flower, planting, harvesting. In this way, they accepted, sometimes with difficulty, the promise of resurrection where they could see it and touch it, less in theology than in their fields and gardens.

Notes

1. In 2005, Sandra Gustafson hailed "the emerging media of today" for their potential to "help us to better understand and preserve the emerging media of early America, making visible the range of textual forms from wampum belts to staged readings." Sandra Gustafson, "The Emerging Media of Early America," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 115 (2005), 249. In the same year, Martin J. Burke called for a "national project" to trace a comprehensive history of ideas in the United States using newly available digital archives, including *Early English Books Online, Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*, and *Early American Imprints*. Burke argues that these resources can clarify the "contours" in early American thought and allow scholars "to compose well-documented histories of a concept, or a cluster of concepts." Martin J. Burke, "Conceptual History in the United States: A Missing 'National Project,'" *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 1 (2005), 131, 135. This chapter responds to both Gustafson and Burke, using a digital archive to "make visible" Puritan gravestones as a "textual form" and to trace the "contours" of Puritan iconoclasm and mourning. For comprehensive descriptions of the digital resources and modes of analysis that have emerged in the decade since Gustafson and Burke anticipated the digital turn in early American studies, see Matt Cohen, "The New Life of the New Forms: American Literary Studies and the Digital Humanities" in *A Companion to American Literary Studies*, ed. Caroline F. Levander and Robert S. Levine (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 532–549; and Matthew Jockers, *Macroanalysis: Digital Methods and Literary History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013).

2. The Farber Gravestone Collection: www.davidrumsey.com/farber/, accessed October 28, 2014. Rumsey is President of Cartography Associates, a digital publishing company, and Chairman of Luna Imaging, maker of the image browser that hosts the Farber Collection.
3. In her introduction to the collection, Jessie Lie Farber writes: "One can easily compare images from different geographic areas and time-frames without having to manually file through thousands of individual photographs. The website also makes it possible to study the stones in an enhanced detail previously unavailable, even in the burial ground." Jessie Lie Farber, "Early American Gravestones: Introduction to the Farber Gravestone Collection" (2003), www.davidrumsey.com/farber/Early%20American%20Gravestones.pdf, accessed October 24, 2014.
4. There are four major studies of Puritan gravestones: Harriett M. Forbes, *Gravestones of Early New England and the Men Who Made Them* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1927); Allan I. Ludwig, *Graven Images: New England Stonecarving and Its Symbols, 1650–1815* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1966); James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: An Archaeology of Early American Life* (1977), expanded and revised edition (New York: Anchor Books, 1996); and Peter Benes, *The Masks of Orthodoxy: Folk Gravestone Carving in Plymouth Colony, Massachusetts, 1689–1805* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1977).
5. Deetz draws the clearest correlation between changes in gravestone iconography and the Great Awakening, arguing that religious revival "freed" stone carvers to abandon the "harsh" symbolism of the death's head in favor a "softer" images like the cherub (*In Small Things Forgotten*, 96–98).
6. For a survey of American poetry, rhetoric, and theology of mourning, see Max Cavitch, *American Elegy: The Poetry of Mourning from the Puritans to Whitman* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007). Cavitch draws special distinctions between Puritan mourning and subsequent forms in the eighteenth century. While Puritan theology focuses on "the terror and uncertainty of death," anticipated "judgment," and "the scrutiny of acts and behaviors that might signify election," the elegies of "post-Calvinist" and "increasingly plural Enlightenment America" typically "waxed optimistic," emphasizing "confidence" in salvation and the "personal aggrandizement" of the deceased. Cavitch uses elegies by Cotton Mather and Benjamin Franklin as exemplars of these two approaches to mourning (45, 48).
7. Deetz uses archaeological seriation to trace this pattern (*In Small Things Forgotten*, 93–98).
8. Farber observes the same pattern that Deetz does, noting a dramatic shift in gravestone iconography between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1675, gravestones featured winged death's heads almost exclusively. By 1800, only about one in thirty stones bore the image. Conversely, only about one in ten stones featured the cherub in 1675. By 1800, cherubs appeared on nearly half of the gravestones in New England. See Farber, "Early American Gravestones: Introduction to the Farber Gravestone Collection."

9. Farber, "Early American Gravestones: Introduction to the Farber Gravestone Collection."
10. "Joseph Bartlett," The Farber Gravestone Collection, accessed October 28, 2014.
11. "James Baily," The Farber Gravestone Collection, accessed October 28, 2014.
12. "Alexander Peronneau," The Farber Gravestone Collection, accessed October 8, 2014.
13. "Jonathan Worcester," The Farber Gravestone Collection, accessed October 28, 2014.
14. A close look at the archive could suggest that there are fewer stones with verse before 1750 because, in general, the archive contains fewer stones from the period before 1750, with or without verse. Contextual evidence that I discuss later in the chapter, however, suggests that a skewed sample cannot fully account for the significant increase in gravestone verse after 1750. We can document the general influence of iconoclasm before the Great Awakening, including several examples of early gravestone verse that ironically decry the use of gravestone verse. We can also demonstrate a correlation, around 1750, between the increase in gravestone verse and a corresponding shift in visual motifs. Both of these factors point to a cultural watershed, rather than a skewed sample, as the reason for the overwhelming the disparity of 94 percent versus 6 percent.
15. "Elizabeth Adams," The Farber Gravestone Collection, accessed October 28, 2014.
16. "Anna Russel," The Farber Gravestone Collection, accessed October 28, 2014.
17. "Annah Southmayd," The Farber Gravestone Collection, accessed October 28, 2014.
18. Ludwig sometimes refers to the poetry of Edward Taylor to elucidate gravestone iconography but does not draw a sustained connection between verse epitaphs and Puritan elegies.
19. Jeffrey A. Hammond, *The American Puritan Elegy: A Literary and Cultural Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), contains a detailed reading of the ritual and liturgical dimensions of Puritan elegy. William J. Schieck's "Tombless Virtue and Hidden Text: New England Puritan Funeral Elegies" in *Puritan Poetry and Poetics: Seventeenth-Century American Poetry in Theory and Practice*, ed. Peter White (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1985), 286–302, also discusses the use of printed elegies in Puritan funerals, where they were pinned to the hearse or coffin, cast into the grave, or distributed as broadsides among the mourners.
20. Hammond, *The American Puritan Elegy*, 56.
21. "Aaron Bowers," The Farber Gravestone Collection, accessed October 28, 2014.
22. "Ephraim Huit," The Farber Gravestone Collection, accessed October 28, 2014.
23. Unknown, The Farber Gravestone Collection, accessed October 28, 2014.

24. While much recent scholarship, including the works referenced throughout this chapter, concern the American culture of mourning and memorial, comparatively few studies focus on child mortality. Peter G. Slater's *Children in the New England Mind: In Death and in Life* (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1977) is exceptional in this regard.
25. Anne Bradstreet, *The Complete Works of Anne Bradstreet*, ed. Joseph R. McElrath, Jr., and Allan P. Robb (Boston: Twayne, 1981), 187.
26. Bradstreet, *The Complete Works*, 187.
27. Bradstreet, *The Complete Works*, 188.
28. Edward Taylor, *The Poems of Edward Taylor*, ed. Donald E. Stanford (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), 469.
29. Taylor, *The Poems*, 470.
30. In *American Puritanism and the Defense of Mourning: Religion, Grief, and Ethnology in Mary White Rowlandson's Captivity Narrative* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), Mitchell Robert Breitwieser observes a similar tension in the account of Rowlandson, who mourned the loss of a six-year-old daughter during her eleven-week captivity among the Wampanoag and Narragansett Indians in 1675. Breitwieser reads Rowlandson's narrative as a "collision" between the Puritan experience of grief and the rituals and literary genres designed "to sublimate mourning, to block and the redirect its vigor" (16, 8). Cavitch notes that while Breitwieser considers Rowlandson's narrative as mediated by conversion narratives, funeral sermons, and scriptural typology, he neglects elegy as part of the "constellation of relevant genres – despite its importance as a supplementary resource for Puritan mourners" (*American Elegy*, 29). Measuring a parallel "sublimation" and dissonance in Puritan epitaphs and in Bradstreet's and Taylor's elegies allows us to close this apparent gap in Breitwieser's analysis.

CHAPTER 12

What Do We Know about the New England Puritans, and When Did We Know It? Twenty-First Century Reconsiderations of William Bradford and John Winthrop

Michael Ditmore

A healthy young sailor dies of natural causes after profanely mocking pious emigrants embarking on a perilous journey. A colonial governor ambitiously declares that the enterprise must become an example to all the world – or else. Aside from obvious commonalities, these familiar staples from seventeenth-century New England Puritan literature – the first by William Bradford, the second by John Winthrop – share something else: neither had an audience to speak of before the nineteenth century, almost 200 years after their initial inscriptions. Their current canonical status masks several ironies: the Bradford and Winthrop who have occupied so central a position in American self-reckoning were not known as authors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; their current status displaces their more "literary" peers (ministers, versifiers, published historians), with the exception of Anne Bradstreet, for political/cultural rather than "literary" reasons. Thus, the nineteenth-century inventions of their works became twentieth-century investments in a politicized, nationalistic canon of origins. Much of the twentieth- and twenty-first century articulations of Puritanism have stemmed from the nineteenth-century collection and publication of documents by antiquarians, collectors, and editors. But when we employ these texts to explain seventeenth-century culture and history, we do so with texts that other members of that culture might not, and probably would not, have so readily recognized.

The total library of New England Puritanism (the entire cataloguable range of extant verbal documents/texts attributable to them, their influences, allies, controversialists, observers, and antagonists) is immense, daunting, scattered, and untidy, although a well-kempt edition, anthology, or database, with its neat scientific categorization, makes it appear

otherwise. It would be more analyzable were it a messy natural geological formation, but, as is, it is more like a shambolic but inhabited archaeological site with a hodge-podge of unpredictable, seemingly repeated layers that have been disturbed, scattered, preserved, hidden, and rearranged by previous generations of descendants, collectors, and scholars with varying motivations, values, and practices.

One reason stems from the Puritans themselves. From the outset, there was a spectrum of attitudes and practices concerning publication. The Pilgrims, who had worked in surreptitious printing in Holland, soon put works about the colony into print in London from publisher John Bellamie (Robert Cushman's 1621 sermon and *Mourt's Relation* both in 1622, and Edward Winslow's *Good Newes from New-England* in 1624), but they also withheld much from widespread scrutiny (Bradford's history, dialogues, and verse). Over time, the colony's laws were published, scribally and in print, but neither the colony's nor the church's records were distributed. Materials circulated in scribal form; others were carefully transcribed for official documentation; in other instances, writing was seized, censored, or made actionable (as in the Lyford–Oldham affair); and others, such as Roger Williams's early controversial treatises, were suppressed or perhaps purposely destroyed. Was Bradford the only Plymouth settler capable of or motivated to keep a running account of public affairs, or was it agreed that there would be but one official version? And then, what the settlers publicized was tailored for a mixed London readership, to settle investor worries without attracting ecclesiastical attention from Archbishop Laud and the Church of England.

In Massachusetts Bay, much the same situation prevailed, albeit on a more widespread, less controlled, and more controversial scale. One might point to the print debate between Roger Williams and John Cotton conducted in the London press through the 1640s, or the Winthrop–Vane controversy (over the 1637 General Court immigration law) exchanged through semi-formal documents intended for distribution but not for print. There were delays, modified contexts, unforeseen audiences. Winthrop shipped the colony's account of its dealings in the Free Grace controversy to London in 1637, but, although it would have circulated in manuscript, it appeared in print in 1643 – that is, after Anne Hutchinson's death, in a different English situation, and perhaps beyond Winthrop's intention.

In short, time's arrow of literary production has been at odds, sometimes greatly so, with time's arrow of print publication, often in stumbling, syncopated ways. Our own historical remove, although difficult to

perceive, is both involved in and sometimes oblivious to that discrepancy. As these and other works (including even their mere archival preservation as scraps) were first printed or reprinted, repackaged, cannibalized, or published for the first time in different contexts – generally through well-financed processes of filiopietistic veneration – readers have had to negotiate multiple and fractious chronologies rather than the smooth and even totality of "current" knowledge for which editors and scholars have assumed an ideal, abstract, even timeline. The questions arise: When and in what ways did certain Puritan matters come into public knowledge/discourse, including our own? What impacts might have been caused by the syncopated and punctuated revelation of Puritan writings published long after the fact of their composition?

David D. Hall has observed that scribal rather than print publication was the norm among the Puritans, based on his analysis of how their documents and scribal/print publications underwent mass, if limited, production as imprints in the nineteenth century, with consequent effects on conceptualizations of Puritanism.[1] To simplify: consider a London reader in 1650, motivated to know of New England and with an extensive range of documentary resources, including pamphlets, books, and scribal publications. What could she have known and when? How would that view look alongside ours? In Hutchinson's case, the materials would have been limited to *A Short Story* (1643) and the pseudonymous *Mercurius Americanus* (1645), plus various heresiographies and an account of a "monstrous" birth. But outside of the limited circle of primary participants, no readers we know of, even in New England, would have had a copy of her civil or church trials (the former came into print in 1767, the latter 1889). We cannot say with much certainty how many readers would have had access to Wheelwright's incendiary sermon (unpublished until 1867). Yet, because there are no writings by Hutchinson herself, these transcripts are as close we can get to her voice and view; the transcripts have become so deeply engrained in our understanding of Hutchinson that it would require a determined will to bracket them and consider her as a 1650 reader might have.

My own point of departure will be the fragmentary, scattered, and semi-hidden publication of Bradford's history before its first (almost) full print appearance in 1856, to consider how this oddly halting manifestation affects interpretation and even the possibility of "reading" it at all. Then I will turn to Winthrop's "A Model" to consider whether it had an audience in Winthrop's time, and what kind of reading or influence it can or should have in ours.

One of the established classics of early American studies, Bradford's history, commonly known as *Of Plymouth Plantation*, needs no introduction, and I will not rehearse the well-known story of its loss, recovery, publication, and eventual return.[2] Instead, I begin by noting four segments of the manuscript's composition and publication history:

1) *Bradford's composition (1630–1650)*. Bradford composed a manuscript that existed entirely in his handwriting and editorship, even when he scrupulously copied other documents.[3] We assume that material not directly quoted stems from Bradford's own wording and imagination. Although internal evidence indicates particular composition periods (1630, 1644, 1646–1650), we should be cautious in assuming how/when Bradford edited and added. Also, it is significant that he bound and framed the manuscript with material generally excluded from discussion (the Hebrew exercises, the Mayflower passenger list).
2) *Preservation and dispersal (1657–1792)*. A seven-year gap exists between the last date reference in the manuscript and Bradford's recorded death. Although not mentioned in Bradford's will with his other writings, the manuscript remained within the family but was used by or loaned to various historians of New England, most notably his nephew Nathaniel Morton (for *New-Englands Memoriall* [1669] and the Plymouth church records, begun in 1680), Increase Mather, Thomas Prince, and Thomas Hutchinson (the last person known to have had access to the manuscript until its rediscovery). This period concludes with Ebenezer Hazard's inexact publication of the Plymouth church records.
3) *Presumed destruction and attempts at recovery (1792–1855)*. Following the manuscript's loss after the Revolutionary War, its ascertainable fragments were kept alive by John Davis, George Bancroft, Alexander Young, John Stetson Barry, and Charles Deane. With one exception, whatever was known of Bradford's manuscript could be considered frozen until its 1856 publication. Young in his *Chronicles*, however, re-edited the Plymouth church records, explicitly ascribing them to Bradford.
4) *Rediscovery, publication, and return (1855–present)*. In one sense, *Of Plymouth Plantation* first became fully available to a reading public in 1856, but in another sense it had been available in fragmentary, uncertain ways since 1669. Its first publication put it into play with what F.O. Matthiessen called the "American Renaissance": *The Scarlet Letter, Moby Dick, Uncle Tom's Cabin,*

> *Walden*, and *Leaves of Grass* all literally precede it, and the Duyckincks' *Cyclopedia of American Literature* had its first edition the previous year (they included two pieces of Bradford's verse). From 1856 forward, the text was widely dispersed in print, and there was a stable manuscript reference point.[4]

Thus, Bradford's history has a complicated history of its own, and more so considered in the light of American literary history.[5] What hasn't been so well described is how and what of the manuscript came into print and when. Morton did not identify when he copied verbatim, when he reworded, or when he added or omitted material; Prince was more scrupulous, but clearly used bits and pieces; likewise, Hutchinson was selective with passages. Before 1856, there was no sense of the history as a complete text, or how much had been published.

The last addition to the Bradford corpus before the manuscript's recovery came in 1848 with an intriguing account of "Incidents on Board the Mayflower" by Charles Deane. The report is only partially correct and almost wholly forgotten, having been superseded by the rediscovery of the manuscript seven years later. Two contextual elements are noteworthy. First, Pilgrim veneration was in full swing. There had been Plymouth Forefather celebrations, with some lapses, since 1769, including a special one for the 1820 bicentennial; likewise, Thanksgiving remembrances had also become important, and Sarah Josepha Hale had already begun her campaign to make it a national day. Second, there was the emergence of the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1791, with its published proceedings and collections, as well as the development of national and regional histories (George Bancroft, John Gorham Palfrey, and John Stetson Barry). Whatever Plymouth town's circumstances in 1848, the Plymouth myth was well established.

In 1845 Samuel G. Drake established the New England Historic Genealogical Society, and, two years later, its periodical, the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, where Deane's account appeared. At this time, all that was known of the Mayflower's trek across the Atlantic, aside from the cursory account in *Mourt's Relation*, came from Morton's *New-Englands Memoriall*: "one of the main Beams of the Midships was bowed and cracked," which was repaired with "a Screw." Readers could have only speculated how closely this followed Bradford's wording. They could resort to Young's *Chronicles*, but he cobbled together his text from *New-Englands Memoriall* and the church records; we wouldn't know until the records' 1920 publication that Morton abbreviated and scribbled

in only a self-advertisement: "see New Englands Memoriall page 12" for the Mayflower voyage.[6]

Deane had recently purchased some manuscript pages for Prince's *A Chronological History of New England* (1736) from the library of the recently deceased John Davis. Prince, like Morton, had access to Bradford's manuscript but carefully annotated quoted passages as such. Prince also referred to the repair of the Mayflower's main beam but worded it differently, indicating that "a *Passenger* having bro't a great Iron Screw from *Holland*, they with it raise the Beam into its Place; and then committing themselves to the Divine Will, Proceed. (*B*)." This alone would have alerted readers that there had been slips between the manuscript and its users.[7]

The pages Deane had purchased included this section. He noticed that Prince had transcribed but then canceled two further passages, both of which, unlike the repair of the main beam, were detachable special providence tales. Deane reproduced Prince's canceled transcription (presumably) exactly, but (if so) the order is reversed and the wording varies from Bradford's manuscript. Here, then, is *my* transcription of *Drake*'s edition of *Deane*'s copy of *Prince*'s transcription from the *Bradford* manuscript (omitting for the sake of space the second paragraph on the rescue of John Howland[8]):

> "In y^{e} Voyage y^{y} note this *Special Providence* – A profane & proud young *seaman*, stout & able of Body, w^{c} made Him y^{e} more haughty, wou'd be allays despising y^{e} poor ppl in y^{e} sea sicknesses, & daily cursing y^{m} wth grevious Execrations, telling y^{m} He hop'd to help to cast Half of y^{m} overboard before y^{y} came to y^{r} journey's End & to make merry wth w^{t} y^{y} had: & w^{h} He was by any gently reproved, he wou'd curse & sware most bitterly. But it pleased God before y^{y} came half seas over, to smite Him wth a grevious Disease, of w^{c} He died in a desperate manner, & was Himself y^{e} 1st thrown overboard, to y^{e} astonishment of all his Fellows. (B)"

Yet that is not exactly how Bradford's account reads, as may be seen from either the original manuscript or from its now-standard twentieth-century edition by Samuel Eliot Morison. While not major, these are not mere editors' differences about expanding contractions, modernized spelling, and so forth. Prince's pruning changed the focus, for Bradford emphasized that the sailor's own crewmates justified his death. Prince extracted what he judged to be factual, apart from how Bradford framed it. For whatever reason, both Morton and Prince bypassed the special providence tales to highlight human ingenuity and effort.

Thus, Deane's excitement over discovering the first details of the Mayflower voyage (aside from the main beam repair) was justified. It would have remained an important discovery had the manuscript not been found. But he was only half-justified: what he had attributed to Bradford turned out to be not 100 percent Bradford after all, and he had no idea of the proper order for assembling the two scraps. In 1879, Deane reflected on this discovery and his response to doubters in 1848 that "Prince was confined in his work to brief extracts" but that he (Deane) had judged these passages to "be genuine . . . and that they bore the unmistakable evidence of having been taken from Bradford."[9] A curiously incurious explanation, that, especially since Deane had seen later how the pieces fit together. Despite Deane's charity toward Prince, the explanation is at odds with Bradford's own transition to the tale. Bradford had written, "I may not omit here," yet Prince (as had Morton before him) judged *he* could well omit the story. But if Bradford claimed a necessity, how was he overruled by two editors, then justified by a third?

Consider that Morton made sure to include Bradford's grand rhetorical digression on their arrival, one of *the* orientation points of early American studies, as too important pass up, although it doesn't necessarily convey anything "factual" and also omits items. (Prince had severely condensed it.) But what about Bradford's long and defensive account of sexual corruptions for 1642? Morton entirely omits it; Deane dutifully included it in the 1856 edition, with an irritable footnote. One might suppose several sound reasons for the omission (irrelevance, scandalous indecorum), but here, too, Bradford justifies why *he* had included at least the Thomas Granger bestiality portion: "Horrible it is to mention, but the truth of the history requires it."[10] Why, then, was Bradford's necessity overruled by Morton's policy?

That question leads to one of the most problematical aspects of the manuscript/book, with its own curious history that may shed light on how we regard it. In part one, Bradford recorded the Scrooby church's twelve-year detour in Holland, then its difficult decision and prolonged negotiations to leave, all the more poignant to him since it meant splitting the group and leaving behind its minister, John Robinson. On folio recto 20 and 21, Bradford transcribed a letter of gratitude from Robinson and William Brewster to Edwin Sandys for the Virginia Council's acceptance of the Seven Articles proposed by the Leyden church. It lists five "instances of inducement" for the venture. The fourth inducement reads: "We are knit together as a body in a most strict and sacred bond and covenant of the Lord, of the violation thereof we make great conscience, and by virtue

whereof we do hold ourselves straitly tied to all care of each other's good and of the whole, by everyone and so mutually." Bradford later inserted an asterisk and "note" to the left of this paragraph; on the facing page (verso 20) he added this lament:

> * O sacred bond, whilst inviolably preserved! How sweet and precious were the fruits that flowed from the same! But when this fidelity decayed, then their ruin approached. O that these ancient members had not died or been dissipated (if it had been the will of God) or else that this holy care and constant faithfulness had still lived, and remained with those that survived, and were in times afterwards added unto them. But (alas) that subtle serpent hath slyly wound in himself under fair pretences of necessity and the like, to untwist these sacred bonds and tied, and as it were insensibly by degrees to dissolve, or in a great measure to weaken, the same. I have been happy, in my first times, to see, and with much comfort to enjoy, the blessed fruits of this sweet communion, but it is now part of my misery in old age, to find and feel the decay and want thereof (in a great measure) and with grief and sorrow of heart to lament and bewail the same. And for others' warning and admonition, and my own humiliation, do I here note the same.[11]

When did *this* volte-face passage first appear in public? In *New-England's Memoriall*, Morton omitted most of the correspondence Bradford had carefully preserved, including this interchange, so there was no reason to include it. Morton *did* include it, without comment in the church records; however, Hazard omitted it. Therefore, it wasn't until the 1841 publication of Young's *Chronicles* that the lament first appeared, apparently copied carefully from Morton's church record transcription. By that time, the Plymouth success myth, which this passage undercuts, was undislodgeable.

This addition, contra the Plymouth success myth and despite echoes of jeremiad rhetoric, reflects failure and abandonment. The sacred covenant has been untwisted and broken, leaving little hope for recuperation, even with divine correction, and there is more than a hint that for Bradford (who is never quite plain enough, in such instances) the rising generation might be a lost cause. There is no way of our knowing, but if it isn't the final addition to the manuscript, it does connect the two sections that frame Bradford's narrative in the physical manuscript but are omitted from its various printings as extraneous: the Hebrew exercises and the list of original Mayflower passengers. Both sections reflect an idealized nostalgia – original language, original passengers – that has rejected the present and future. From there, Bradford took himself to the sharper, more direct didacticism of the verse and dialogues. But I suggest we take his "warning and admonition" here with some seriousness, although it was obviously

ignored by Morton and, even after its 1841 publication, those bent on mythmaking Plymouth into a success story. Instead, Bradford would have stringently opposed the dissemination of his account to an indiscriminate, ungodly readership – including us. The rush to discover and then print the manuscript may seem natural, even laudable, at this remove, because it can't be reversed. But if it cannot be honored, perhaps his wish can be respected by paying closer attention to the twists and turns of chronology in the history of the *History*'s print publication.

A different case with potentially higher stakes rests on Winthrop's "A Model," first because it has become an accepted foundation for the Puritan enterprise specifically and American character generally, and second because since 1960 it has increasingly become an essential text of American exceptionalist/triumphalist political discourse for a single phrase: "city upon a hill." Winthrop didn't invent the phrase and would have been profoundly grieved for anyone ever to think that he did. From 1664 (at the latest), "A Model" was virtually unknown before its first imprint publication in 1838.[12] Unlike Bradford's manuscript, not only was no antiquarian thirsting after it, but we can only speculate about whether it was delivered, and if so, where and when; we also need to consider how closely it does or does not reflect a consensus at the Great Migration's setting out. But no evidence indicates that it asserted any influence on Old or New England, just as there is no evidence that anyone consulted it as a diagnostic. As with Bradford's manuscript, we can check the various diligent historians, collectors, and archivists through the early nineteenth century (Morton, William Hubbard, Joshua Scottow, the Mathers, Prince, Thomas Hutchinson) without finding reference to it. It was not included in Scottow's 1696 collection of founding documents *Massachusetts, or, The first planters of New-England*. More inexplicably, it was omitted from the tercentenary *The Founding of Massachusetts*, although the 1630–1631 portion of Winthrop's journal was included. There is little traceable influence in the nineteenth century even after its publication. One measure of how slowly it gained a foothold would be to consider the Duyckincks' *Cyclopedia*, seventeen years after the first re-appearance of "A Model": although they noted it, they selected instead two extracts from the journal. So little valued was "A Model" that Young omitted it from *Chronicles of the First Planters of Massachusetts Bay* (1846).

"A Model" survives in a single manuscript in two different hands, neither of which is Winthrop's. The provenance of the manuscript is uncertain, except that it once belonged to Francis Bayard Winthrop, a direct descendant who donated it to the New-York Historical Society,

along with twenty-one other items, in 1809. Almost another thirty years passed before it was printed. Like that for *Of Plymouth Plantation*, its first real, full audience was antiquarian in nature, eager for scraps traceable to the ancestors. Another century passed before its significance became instituted. As Richard Gamble suggests, its sizable present-day influence *is* traceable, to its 1931 re-edited printing in the second volume of the *Winthrop Papers* and then its subsequent abridgment in Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson's *The Puritans: A Sourcebook* (1938).[13]

If we can trace its current status to 1930s reprints, similarly we can trace its academic establishment to Perry Miller's various uses of it, in *The New England Mind*, "Errand into the Wilderness," and "The Shaping of the American Character."[14] Gamble narrows down the political source, across a broad leap that can't be filled in, to then President-elect John F. Kennedy's farewell address to the Massachusetts General Court on January 9, 1961, and in turn to speechwriter Ted Sorenson, in a multicultural synthesis of non-Puritans. There the trail goes cold. Sorenson could not recall how he came by the reference, and Gamble could not connect Kennedy to Miller at Harvard. Kennedy's allusion marks the first documented instance of "A Model" as a public utterance. It now simply is de rigeur, although the use of the phrase has been most closely associated with Ronald Reagan.[15]

Thus, following its 1838 imprint in a collection of historical documents, Winthrop's discourse experienced a twin, mid-twentieth century, and intermittently overlapping canonization: one into historical criticism and literature anthologies, the other into American political rhetoric.[16] On the whole it has gained an influence and notoriety it never had in its original setting. How did a discourse seemingly designed for a political community wait 200 years to find a very different audience that, if it bothered, had to struggle mightily to sympathize with Winthrop's mission but was eager to exploit to something aged, originary, and hallowed? Greil Marcus captures the matter succinctly in characterizing "A Model" as a private discourse with a fabricated audience and points toward ways of understanding the sermon's basic motivation and action: verbally to forge a community that existed at this point mainly on paper and in signed agreement among a select few, approved malcontents.[17]

We cannot confirm that "A Model" actually *was* composed aboard the *Arbella*, or when. We cannot go beyond "probably" (if that far) in judging whether it was delivered.[18] But it is a little late now, as the assumption has become an established datum. Miller's matter-of-fact descriptions have licensed numerous creative history writers to exercise dramatic flair. Likewise, the imputation that this one discourse is fundamental to

American values is now irretrievable and incorrigible. For the Puritan scholar who bemoans laboring in obscurity, "A Model" is an ironic accusation of what can happen when one's subject escapes the musty confines of the library and the lecture hall.

Granted, there must have been a *public* design for this seemingly private paper. It seems unlikely that Winthrop composed at such length and with such care for private reflection alone or that its use of "we" wouldn't have been intended for circulation in some way, and it *does* have the earmarks of a lay sermon or public discourse. But perhaps not. Winthrop's considerable literary output reflects many iterations *except* that of published author. A 1650 reader would have known his name almost solely as a leader of the Massachusetts Bay enterprise and as signatory to two printed works: *The Humble Request* (1630) and *Declaration of Former Passages* (1645). His name would have also have been associated with a letter in circulation, an account of Mary Dyer's "monstrous birth" that was later printed.[19] In New England, his writing took various forms: private and official correspondence; a long-running journal very much like Bradford's, but less formal and more haphazard; documents of controversy that he distributed for review (and sometimes scuttled); a spiritual autobiography intended for limited distribution; and a collection of edited documents of the colony's dealing in the Free Grace controversy.

It might seem absurd to liken "A Model" to a tree falling in the forest with no one around to hear it, and yet it was a public discourse without a public for almost 200 years. Unlike Winthrop's private writings, "A Model" supposes an audience of like-minded partners in a joint enterprise. But how ironic that the document credited with broadcasting "city upon a hill" was itself hidden and obscured for so long, and that when it *did* shine forth, it was in a context drastically at odds with anything Winthrop could have experienced or valued.

Interpretive ironies abound when the publication history of "A Model" is considered. Winthrop broadly addresses particular practicalities (giving, lending, forgiving) of the covenanted community, but although historians have gauged Massachusetts Bay by the yardstick of this famous sermon, it is questionable whether Winthrop or any of his contemporaries did so. Winthrop lays out clearly and concisely some fundamental attributes of the community, and yet he didn't return to it as a key to interpreting and negotiating the many crises of the colony. Winthrop rarely gave in to such stock-taking.

"A Model" possesses balance, wholeness, and clarity, but Winthrop deviates in two places, one obvious and one obscure. The obvious deviation

occurs in Winthrop's account of the "special Commission," a passage leading to the city image and virtually always included in reprintings. Winthrop cites Saul's momentous failure "to destroy Amaleck," against God's express command. By disobedience to an express command, Saul lost his kingship, providing Winthrop with an exemplary warning against misconduct. With this, he notes "the cause betweene God and vs" and describes the enterprise's character: "wee are entered into Covenant with him for this worke, wee haue taken out a Commission, the Lord hath giuen vs leaue to drawe our owne Articles wee haue professed to enterprise these Accions vpon these and these ends, wee haue herevpon besought him of favour and blessing." Such a covenant, however, wants a signification of acceptance; for Winthrop, safe arrival in New England would show that God "had ratified this Covenant and sealed [their] Commission," expecting then "strickt performance of the Articles contained in it."[20]

This has served as an immensely useful passage for illuminating covenantal thought, but close reading reveals slippage, inconsistency, and inexplicable sketchiness, at the crucial spot requiring precision. God's command to Saul was clear and detailed, but the covenant described by Winthrop, except in outline form, is anything but. What *is* or *are*: their "Commission"? their "owne Articles"? "these Accions"? "these and these ends"? These are fill-in-the-blank phrases, parodic of contract language. Perhaps Winthrop thought them too well known to need repetition to the company, or he avoided exactness for fear of the manuscript's being circulated too widely, or he intended to flesh out his ideas later (although that would be especially awkward in a covenant requiring "strickt performance"). But in a warning that emphasizes exacting obedience to the minutest detail, *not* to have detail at all is strangely unsettling.

The obscure passage comes earlier and is, I would think, rarely read. Given the discourse's length and its presumed political import, readers have naturally gravitated toward those passages obviously applicable to the establishment and ordering of a commonwealth, mainly the beginning (with the "rules" for giving, lending, and forgiving) and the ending (with the grandiose characterization of its purpose). In the middle, Winthrop tackles abstract theological matter in moving from socio-political charity to "love" in a wide-ranging sense, from its practice to its grounds, broken into definition, patterns, how it happens, and its exercise. "Love language" is not, to say the least, a generally typical feature of political discourse. It isn't the love language alone that is different. The cross-gender trope of the mother to child as analogous with God to creature/elect is itself striking, even in the context of the *sponsa Christi* tradition. But Winthrop then

redevelops the trope by inverting the Adam–Eve relationship at exorbitant length and exclamatory tone in ten parallel phrases beginning "shee," built out of a seeming misattribution of Genesis 2:23.[21] In any case, the underwritten character of the covenant and the overwritten elaboration of love's exercise suggest either that Winthrop had not finished the discourse or that, like Bradford, he would have prevented its wide dissemination – which, of course, is exactly what has happened to it over the second half of the twentieth century.

I have merely pointed toward surfaces to be scratched regarding the nineteenth-century impact on twentieth- and twenty-first-century conceptualizations of seventeenth-century New England Puritanism, by considering two signal instances of that understanding and something of the implications of disseminated publication. Both cases were predicated on supplying previously unknown – or not fully known – texts, which later became enshrined, institutionalized, and embedded not simply in treatments of Puritanism but in characterizations of America in toto in texts and terms that arguably would not have been recognizable by Bradford's and Winthrop's peers. It is, of course, the methodology of historical reckoning to consider all available data to provide as full a treatment of a given subject as possible, but there is history and there is history. Rather than focusing on the exceptional, undisseminated statements of particular individuals, a history of the materials by which Puritans publicly understood and communicated themselves might well yield a different Puritanism than we have come to know. For that matter, it might well yield a different nineteenth century, filled with collectors, antiquarians, and editors too much neglected.

Notes

1. David D. Hall, *Ways of Writing: The Practice and Politics of Text-making in Seventeenth-century New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 30.
2. See Samuel Eliot Morison, xxvii–xl, in William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation, 1620–1647*, ed. Samuel Eliot Morison (1952; New York: Knopf, 1991). Unless otherwise noted, references to the Bradford manuscript will be drawn from the Morison edition as "Morison," followed by a page number.
3. Prince did add notes/corrections, and there are some other materials, but the various editors have felt comfortable in separating Bradford's handwriting.
4. The entire manuscript has been produced only twice, both times in photofacsimile: the first in a black-and-white, limited edition in 1896 (*History of the Plimouth Plantation*), and the second in downloadable pdf from the State Library of

Massachusetts from 2012. Otherwise, the printing of all its Bradford contents occurred only by 1949, with Isidore Meyer's publication of the Hebrew exercises. See William Bradford, *History of Plymouth Plantation*, ed. Charles Deane, *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 4 ser. 3 (1856); *History of the Plimoth Plantation* . . . (London: Ward and Downey/Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1896); and *Of Plimoth Plantation: manuscript, 1630–1650*, The State Library of Massachusetts: http://archives.lib.state.ma.us/handle/2452/208249.

5. Although Bradford's history has attracted many excellent critical treatments, I note Douglas Anderson's exceptionally thorough and thoughtful *William Bradford's Books: Of Plimmouth Plantation and the Written Word* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), although I part company with his view that Bradford intended the history for printing (32). Bradford's design emulated print practices, to be sure, and he might have welcomed scribal copying, but I think he would have restricted readership to the godly.
6. Nathaniel Morton, *New-Englands Memoriall* (Cambridge: John Usher, 1669), 11; *Plymouth Church Records, 1620–1859*, 2 vols., ed. Arthur Lord, *Publications of The Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XXII, Collections (Boston: By the Society, 1920), 49.
7. Thomas Prince, *A Chronological History of New England, in the Form of Annals* (Boston: Kneeland & Green, 1736), 72.
8. Charles Deane, "Incidents on Board the Mayflower. 1620," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 2 (1848): 186–188; see 187–188.
9. Deane, "Remarks by Charles Deane," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 17 (1880), 64–66; quotation at 65.
10. Morison, in Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, 320.
11. Morison, in Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, 33.
12. The few references to it were contained in private correspondence not published until the nineteenth century.
13. Richard Gamble, *In Search of the City on a Hill: The Making and Unmaking of an American Myth* (New York: Continuum, 2012), 93. Daniel T. Rodgers had explored American exceptionalism historically and topically in "Exceptionalism," *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past*, ed. Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 21–40 and "American Exceptionalism Revisited," *Raritan* 24.2 (2004), 21–47.
14. "Shaping" represents the height or nadir of Miller's treatment. Originally delivered at Wellesley College in 1954, then published in *New England Quarterly* the next year, it became the lead essay in the posthumous *Nature's Nation* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967), 1. Miller describes Winthrop delivering the address but erroneously notes a 1630 publication. This "fact" puts Winthrop at the very beginning of American character. Miller made an egregious slip in the original address, then it stood uncorrected through journal and later book publication.
15. Gamble, *In Search of the City on a Hill*, 133.

16. It is one measure of the discourse's delayed canonization that critical scrutiny has emerged only in the past twenty or so years, beginning with Anderson in 1990 (8–18) and including Gamble. Important (and welcome) treatments can be found in the following: Hugh J. Dawson, "John Winthrop's Rite of Passage: The Origins of the 'Christian Charitie' Discourse," *Early American Literature* 26 (1991), 219–231, and "'Christian Charitie' as Colonial Discourse: Rereading Winthrop's Sermon in Its English Context," *Early American Literature* 33 (1998), 117–148; Stephen Howard Browne, "Errand into Mercy: Rhetoric, Identity, and Community in John Winthrop's 'Modell of Christian Charity'," *Rhetoric, Religion, and the Roots of Identity in British Colonial America*, ed. James R. Andrews (East Lansing: Michigan University Press, 2007), 1–35; Matthew S. Holland, *Bonds of Affection: Civic Charity and the Making of America – Winthrop, Jefferson, and Lincoln* (Washington, DC; Georgetown University Press, 2007), 56–90; and Abram C. Van Engen, "Origins and Last Farewells: Bible Wars, Textual Form, and the Making of American History," *New England Quarterly* 86.4 (2013), 543–592.
17. Greil Marcus, *The Shape of Things to Come: Prophecy and the American Voice* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006), 20.
18. In *John Winthrop: America's Forgotten Founding Father* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), Francis J. Bremer critiques the possibilities, 431–432, n. 9.
19. See Valerie and Morris Pearl, eds., "Governor John Winthrop on the Birth of the Antinomians' 'Monster': The Earliest Reports to Reach England and the Making of a Myth," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts History Society* 102 (1990), 21–37.
20. Winthrop, "A Modell of Christian Charity," *Winthrop Papers*, vol. 2: 1623–1630, ed. Stewart Mitchell (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1931), 282–295; see 294–295.
21. See Winthrop, 290–291.

CHAPTER 13

Claiming the High Ground: Catholics, Protestants, and the City on a Hill

Abram Van Engen

In the seventeenth century, the phrase "city on a hill" belonged to Catholics. Based on Matthew 5:14 – where Jesus declares, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill, cannot be hid" – the expression was taken by Catholics to indicate this "city" as their "church." The Catholic Church was, after all, the only one visible, the only one "set on a hill," since the time of Christ. In response, Protestants often approached Matthew 5:14 defensively, answering Catholics by reinterpreting the verse and turning to other passages, instead. The seventeenth-century debate about Matthew 5:14 was widespread and long lasting, and yet no scholar has considered this dispute in relation to *A Model of Christian Charity*, John Winthrop's 1630 Puritan sermon in which he proclaims to fellow emigrants that "we shall be as a city upon a hill." In the seventeenth century, "city on a hill" concerned the nature of the true church. When Protestants and Catholics cited this line, they were battling over everything from the meaning and necessity of visibility (should the true church always be seen, and if so by whom?) to the writing of history itself (who were the members of this true church in the past, and what line of succession led all the way back to Christ?). By uncovering this debate, we can examine how a Puritan response to Catholic theologians could eventually lead to American politicians calling the United States a "shining city on a hill." Yet even as they have adopted this phrase, politicians have shifted its meaning back toward a more Catholic understanding. In short, the use of "city on a hill" in modern political rhetoric invites a re-examination of what this phrase actually meant in its own day; through that examination, we also discover the Catholic roots – and Catholic form – of American exceptionalism today.

At stake in the seventeenth-century debate about Matthew 5:14 was the nature and visibility of the true church. For Catholics, the true church was marked by conspicuousness. Already in 1556, an anti-Protestant English

homily declared, "Marke thou good Chrysten man and woman, that Chryst our master sayth it [the church] to be buylded as a citie upon a hill, that can not be hyd." It could not be hidden, Catholics explained, because Christ "biddeth that for the redresse of such matters as be betwyxt thy neyghbour & the, that thou shuldest apeale to the church, & there thou must . . . obey and abyde the determinacion of the Church, the which were altogether spoken in vaine if the Church coulde not be knowen."[1] James Sharpe, a Jesuit who worked in England to convert Protestants, used this same line of reasoning in 1630. Protestants, he argued, can give no reason for believing one thing rather than another. "This spirit therefore hath not the conspicuity and visibility," he declared, "of being *as a tabernacle in the Sunne . . . a citty upon a hill: a mountaine in the top of mountains elevated above the little hills*, that it may be seene, and knowne of all the world. All which yet are agreable to the Catholike Church."[2] As Catholics repeatedly proclaimed, the true church had always been visible, in a clear succession from Christ through the popes to the present day. When Christ declared, "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid," he promised *perpetual visibility*, a phrase Catholics often repeated. And the only church perpetually visible since the time of Christ was theirs.

Catholics used Matthew 5:14, then, to scoff at the Protestant idea of an "invisible church," the notion that true saints were known by God even if unknown to the world. While Protestants could argue that such an idea ran back to Augustine, Catholics tended to reject this application of his thought, pointing out quite rightly that the phrase "invisible church" never appears in the Bible. Instead, Christ established a visible church so that all could know whom to trust and obey. John Abbot, another Jesuit missionary in England, wrote in 1623:

> JESUS (the worth of whose brave name wee tell)
> Giveth a voice to'th making of our bell,
> And speaketh thus, living it was my will
> To build my Church and Cittie on a Hill.
> I built my Tempel on a mountaine high,
> Conspicuous and expos'd to ev'rie eye:
> Had I made man invisible to goe,
> I would have likewise built my temple soe.[3]

The true church was not an unknown band of invisible saints but a visible institution established by Christ. To be true – that is, to be *known* as true – the church had to be exposed to every eye.

As opposed to this conspicuous true church of perpetual visibility, said Catholics, Protestants invented new heresies with no history. If no

Protestants existed until Martin Luther, Catholics taunted, then clearly the Protestant position could not be traced back to Christ. As one Catholic writer pressed:

> you in the meane tyme, without any lineall Descente from those whome you pretend to have beene your Auncestors . . . do still remayne in the darcknes of your invisible Church, tossed in the Sea of Error, with every winde of new Doctrine, not knowing certainly whome to follow, nor what to believe, untill at the last, even the wisest of you being wearie of seeking, and desperate of finding that which they seeke, come to hold all opinions probable, which is in effect to believe nothing.

The writer contrasted such a sad state of affairs with the practice of Catholics, who "follow the fame and greatnes of that Church, which by converting Countries and Nations in all Ages, is become eminent and apparent above all other sortes of Christians, like a *Citty upon a Hill*, above the Moale-hills."[4] The true church was "hid from no mans eine"; instead, Catholics proclaimed, "The Church of God must still appeare, / As a City on a hill."[5] Understanding Matthew 5:14 as a promise from Christ, Catholics used "city on a hill" to defend their church as true and to attack Protestant sects as false.

This claim did not go away. In a publication from 1700, for example, the Protestant biblical scholar John Lightfoot could still be found writing about it. "The Papists," Lightfoot said, "indeed brag of the Visibility of their Church. They will have it a City on a Hill; a Candle on a Candlestick, *&c. Mat*. v.14, 15. and make a puff at the Protestant Church, because it was not visible Two Hundred Years ago; and their Church hath been a Thousand Years."[6] Lightfoot rejected this claim, of course, but his rejection only proved its persistence. Matthew 5:14 kept requiring an answer, in part because its Catholic interpretation seemed so strong. One of the most popular seventeenth-century apologists for Protestantism, Sir Humphrey Lynde, called the Catholic interpretation "the grand poynt of *Visibilitie*, (which [Catholics] so much magnifie among themselves)."[7] While he, like others, claimed the Catholic argument could "easily be called in question," Lynde still had to acknowledge that the Catholics had, by and large, appropriated the phrase "city on a hill." So much was this phrase identified with Catholicism that when the philosopher Alexander Ross put together an account of all the world's religions in 1655, he explained the Catholic "Doctrine concerning the Church" with reference to Matthew 5:14: Catholics, he wrote, believe "the true Catholike Church is always visible; for it is compared to a Mountain, to a Candle, to a City on

a Hill, *&c.*"[8] In the seventeenth century, "city on a hill" served most often as a Roman Catholic proof text, one that had to be addressed and explained away.

Protestants responded by turning to two other passages instead: Luke 12:32 and Revelations 12. In Luke 12:32, Jesus proclaims, "Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's pleasure to give you the kingdom." If Catholics owned "city on a hill," so to speak, then Protestants possessed the phrase "little flock." At about the same time as Winthrop's migration, for example, Lynde cited this line repeatedly. "It is not the name of Catholique (which they assume) that makes good the Catholique doctrine," he claimed, "neither is it the opinion of the great learning, or the multitude on that side which must out face the truth, for our Saviour Christ doth especially note the members of his body by the name of a *Little flocke*, as if the paucitie of true beleevers were the special Caracter of the true Church." He repeated, "[W]e account not universalitie of nations and people, a marke of our Church, but we say it is a *little flocke, and the number of Gods Elect are but few*."[9] Truth was not a matter of great size; in fact, Lynde argued, the true church would often be small. He opened a new treatise in 1630 with the same point, arguing that "our Saviour himselfe by way of prevention, cals his *Church* by the name of *A little flocke*, as if a small number were the ancient Character of the true Church."[10] A few years later, the Protestant minister Thomas Taylor, who spent much of his career arguing against Catholicism, specifically addressed the Catholic claim to Matthew 5:14 by describing the true church, again, as "a selected company called out of the world, a little flock."[11]

Again, the examples went a long way back. In the sixteenth century, the Protestant clergyman John Prime – another writer known for his attacks on Catholicism – addressed the church's visibility using Galatians 4:27 as his entry point. Prime opened a section labeled: "*The motives of* multitudes *and of the Churches* visibility *jointly handled with due aunswere to their chiefest cavils*." Like many other Protestants both then and later, Prime argued, "The Church of Christ is a little flock, a flocke and therefore many, but a litle flock, and therefore a small many, and smally respected, and though many are called unto, yet fewe are chosen."[12] The tension here seems to be present in multiple Protestant writings: truth is universal but select. The elect were spread throughout the world, but they were spread *thin* – not a conspicuous multitude, but a "small many."

When not calling the true church "a little flock," Protestants often identified it with the woman of Revelations 12 who flees into the

wilderness. In an anti-Catholic poem from 1604, the Puritan Samuel Hieron explained in rhyming couplets:

> The Woman, which to Desert fled,
> From Sathans rage to hide her head,
> By all the Learneds full consent,
> The Church on earth doth represent.[13]

All agreed, in other words, that this woman symbolized the church, and as such, Revelations 12 became the perfect biblical text for Protestants. "Do you looke for *A Citie upon a Hill* in the darke night of errour and ignorance?" Lynde thundered. "I appeale to your own consciences; to what purpose were the prophecies of Christ and his Apostles, that the Church *should flie into the wildernesse, and lie hid there*?" Appearing first in his preface, this point returned near the end of his popular treatise: "How comes it to passe," he asked, "that the Church of God, (which is tearmed a Citie upon a hill) should bee obscured, and scarcely discerned in these latter ages? It was foretold: *The woman fled into the wildernesse, where she had a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there*."[14] Thomas Taylor, in his anti-Catholic treatise, likewise declared that the "Papists" were confuted in "[d]enying that ever their Church fled into the wildernesse," for "if their doctrine bee true, that the Church must ever bee as a City on a hill; the spirit must bee false, and the Scriptures, which affirme shee must flie into the wildernesse from the fury of Antichrist."[15] Far from being mighty and conspicuous, the true church was often small and hidden, a "little flock," a woman fleeing into the wilderness, a "small many" unseen by the world but nourished by God.

Given the way these verses were so frequently tossed at each other, it should not surprise us that when the Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, George Abbot, wrote *A Treatise of the Perpetuall Visibilitie, and Succession of the True Church in All Ages* (1624), he turned to the same arguments and verses. Claiming that the true church existed from the time of Christ down through every age, Abbot explained that it had necessarily been hidden in the dark ages before Luther. Speaking of that time, Abbot wrote, "The Woman, clothed with the Sun, having the Moon under her feet, was now fled into the Wildernesse, and had but a fewe Stars to discover her." Abbot then used the examples of Israel and early Christianity to argue that the true followers of Christ were often small and inconspicuous, adding (as Protestants were wont to do): "When our Saviour had selected out his Apostles, they then were termed by the name of a Flocke; but yet by their Master they were called but a *little flocke*." He added, "And againe,

that there might bee no doubt in a matter of this moment, letteth us further know, that the *woman fled into the wildernesse, where shee hath a place prepared of God*. It is not doubted of betweene the Romanists and us, but this Woman doeth represent the Church."[16] Abbott, Lynde, Taylor, and many others answered the Catholic claim to Matthew 5:14 by turning to Luke 12:32 and Revelations 12.[17]

Even so, Protestants could not leave Matthew 5:14 alone. To unpack that verse, they often turned it from a promise to a warning. Christ was not guaranteeing the perpetual visibility of the true church, they explained; instead, he was proclaiming that true Christians, wherever they happened to appear, had better behave as though the whole world were watching. The "cannot" of "cannot be hidden," Prime clarified, "is here taken for *Cannot* in dewty . . . not for an absolute impossibilitie. For the highest hils may bee sometimes hid with mistes."[18] Protestants could not pretend Matthew 5:14 did not exist; they *had* to cite it, use it, and interpret it, in part because Catholics so often did. But when Protestants turned to this verse, they offered a new meaning to the same old words: it was not a pledge, they said, but a caution. Hills, after all, can be hidden by mists. The image, as an image, never promises much of anything.

As a Protestant warning, not a Catholic promise, Matthew 5:14 implied that the visibility of the true church could come and go. This was a point Protestants frequently reiterated, usually by reference to the moon. Rhodes's "answer" to a "Romish Rime" explained:

> So that sometimes as Sunne and Moone,
> it [the church] is eclip'st and hath her doome,
> In mans conceit to shine no more:
> but God againe doth her restore.[19]

Two years later, Hieron added his own stanzas to the same effect:

> Sometime the Moone with chéerefull light
> Shines in the height of Heaven bright:
> Sometime with Cloudes tis overspred,
> And in the Wane cleane vanished.
> So is the Church in safety still,
> Although not alway visible.[20]

Archbishop Abbot made the same point, citing the moon as used in both Augustine and Ambrose to offer the metaphor some ancient weight.[21] Lynde, in his anti-Catholic treatise, summarized the approach: "I speake not this in any sort to decline the visibility of our *Church*; for the Church is like the *Moone*, which hath often waxings & waynings, and wee

know the Moone at full, and the Moone at the waine, is one and the same Moone, although not alike conspicuous."[22] Sometimes the most powerful people would be the worst Christians. During such times, the true church would wane. At other times, it might wax like the full moon, shining bright. Although the true church remained forever present, its appearance could come and go. Visibility, in short, was a *hope*, not an expectation; a duty, not a promise.

The idea that, like the moon, the true church was always present even if unseen, meant that Protestants had to go about writing and rewriting history in order to rebut Catholic charges. To counter Catholic accusations based in Matthew 5:14, Protestants often constructed an alternative history of truth leading all the way back to Christ: Puritans, after all, claimed to be getting *rid* of "men's inventions," not inventing something new.[23] But in order to tie themselves back to Christ, Protestants had to argue that the true church always existed *somewhere*, even if only in small, persecuted pockets. So when Catholics cited "city on a hill," Protestants often responded by pointing to the *dissenters* from the Catholic Church in ages past, certain supposed heretics of previous centuries who could then be reinterpreted as true believers, reformers, and saints. In other words, the writing of history – its construction and interpretation, especially regarding who counted as heretics, martyrs, and saints – reflected wider debates about the meaning of a city on a hill. Where that city was in the present and how one should understand it depended on histories that would spell out its Founders and citizens in ages past.

According to Protestant histories, the rise of Catholicism had turned the party of dissent into the party of truth: *protest* marked the succession of truth that led from Christ to the light of Luther. In this way, Protestants could reclaim antiquity and visibility *against* Catholicism, even if, as they admitted, that visibility was seldom seen. "*If for no other cause, yet for this alone*," Lynde began his treatise on the *Safe Way*, "*that the world may know it is no difficult matter for a meane Lay-man to proove the ancient visibilitie of the Protestant profession, I have attempted to send foorth this Essay of my poore endevours in this cause*." He had been provoked, he explained, by a Jesuit challenging him to "proove out of some good Authors, that the Protestant Church was in all ages visible, especially in the ages before Luther."[24] In response, Lynde attempted to demonstrate that protesters and reformers – the true believers – had existed and been known despite the Catholic Church from the time of Christ to the present day. Archbishop Abbot's tract was titled: "A treatise of the perpetuall visibilitie, and succession of the true church in all ages." Abbot's "true church" was, of course,

Protestant; Protestants alone "retained the purity of the Apostles doctrine, unmixed with dregs of errour and superstition, especially in the gloomy and dark Ages before *Luther*."[25] If the truth existed, it could be seen, even if those who saw it constituted a "little flock" known only to each other. The majority of his treatise (over seventy pages) offers a long and detailed history of dissenters and reformers before Luther, a succession of protest and true belief leading all the way back to Christ. Years later, the famous Puritan writer John Owen phrased this Protestant position well: "When a Church professeth the Truth, it is the *ground and pillar* of it, a City on a hill; that is visible though no man see it, yea though no man observe or contemplate on any thing about it."[26] "Visible though no man see it" – that line best summarizes how Protestants could reclaim Matthew 5:14. The "perpetual visibility" of the true church was theoretically and theologically always present, but its flourishing was variously visible to the world and would always remain so, much like the moon. Ideally, these Protestants admitted, the church should be seen in all its truth, shining from the top of a hill. Yet merely being seen, they concurred, was itself no mark of truth.

When Governor John Winthrop, in 1630, declared to fellow emigrants that they would be "as a city upon a hill," he entered this international debate. Several scholars have argued that Winthrop is not announcing the establishment of an exemplary model or a mission for Christendom. In fact, according to Andrew Delbanco, Winthrop "expresses a desire for anonymity." What he hoped to create, these critics agree, was something like a refuge, a safe haven where the godly could live in the purity of the ordinances of God.[27] But if Winthrop really wanted to make that his message, he had the means and verses to do it: he could have proclaimed, as did many Protestants, that the true church was a "little flock," as John Wheelwright himself would do against Winthrop during the Antinomian controversy. Or he could have claimed that, like the woman of Revelations 12, true believers would have to bide their time in the wilderness. In fact, that is precisely what several other Puritan settlers did claim.[28] In other words, if scholars are right that Winthrop hoped for a hidden and invisible refuge of true belief, it seems rather strange for him to have skipped the usual Protestant verses cited to make just that point.

Instead, Winthrop turned to the more Catholic phrase, "city on a hill." What is striking, then, is not so much that the line occurs in passing, but rather that it occurs at all.[29] At the same time as Winthrop's sermon, Lynde in London was proclaiming against Catholics: "Your *Church* of *Rome* is too too visible in this Kingdome." Lynde's words, "too too visible," reveal

a tension present already in England and soon to face New England as well: in the midst of defending an *invisible* communion of saints, how could they also hope to establish a *visible* "city on a hill"? Precisely because of the way Catholics used Matthew 5:14, Protestants and Puritans like John Winthrop who were engaged in institutionalizing a true church had to insist on an interpretation of Matthew 5:14 in which visibility could come and go. What resulted from that insistence, however, was a warning to followers that they must not fall away. In fact, Catholics were the perfect example of a people who professed themselves Christians and then persecuted the godly. When Winthrop told his fellow settlers, "[W]ee are a Company professing our selves fellow members of Christ," he was setting the stage for a warning about living up to the duties of belief: "the eies of all people are uppon us; soe that if wee shall deale falsely with our god in this worke wee have undertaken and soe cause him to withdrawe his present help from us, wee shall be made a story and a by-word through the world."[30] Interpreting "city on a hill" as something other than a promise of perpetual visibility, Protestants turned that line into an injunction to lead holy lives – an injunction that, if followed, would make the true church visible for all to see.

Such, indeed, was the hope. The true church had waned for a thousand years of Catholic rule; it was time now for it to wax. As the Protestant clergyman Thomas Reeve preached on the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot in 1632, "a Church flourishing, is the *Saints* eye-pleasure, the worlds amazement." He added, "There is not a more delectable spectacle upon earth, then the face of a Church visible." Celebrating the anti-Catholic day by praising Queen Elizabeth, he claimed that she "set our Church like a Citie upon a hill."[31] So, too, even as Winthrop warned against backsliding, he held out the hope that his people might live in such a way as to become like a city on a hill.[32] Being conspicuous could never serve as a mark of truth; but if people had the truth and lived it, they could hope to be conspicuous.

This context helps explain a further shift in Matthew 5:14. Catholics saw the verse as applying to the one universal church institutionalized throughout the world with a visible hierarchy extending back to the pope. Protestants agreed that the communion of saints was universal, but, lacking the institutional structures of Catholicism, they more often aligned the phrase "city on a hill" with particular instantiations of that communion in specific places. When Winthrop used the line, for example, he likened *New England* – not the church universal, but this colonial plantation in which a particular church would be built – to a "city upon a hill." Francis Bremer has shown how Puritans used Matthew 5:14 as a call to exemplarity.[33] But

noticeably, the Puritan "lights" and "cities" drawn from this verse refer only to gathered communities and towns, the people of particular places. When a Protestant like William Wilkinson used the phrase, for example, he claimed that *Colchester*, "for the earnest profession of the gospel, became like unto the city upon a hill."[34] Localizing "city on a hill," Protestants challenged Catholic claims to the one, true universal church.

Wilkinson's line, moreover, points us to one other important Protestant–Catholic contrast concerning Matthew 5:14: the difference between a metaphor and a simile. Wilkinson did not call Colchester *a* or *the* city upon a hill; instead, he *likened* it to such a city. Where Catholics more often used the verse as a metaphor – their church simply *is* the city on a hill – Protestants instead suggested that this church or that town, this people or that place, had become, for a time, "like unto" a city on a hill. In these ways, the phrase for Protestants became both more analogical and what we might anachronistically think of as more political than it was for Catholics: that is, it concerned *a* polis, not *the* church, and it *compared* that polis to a city on a hill rather than declaring that it simply *was* the city of Matthew 5:14.

These differences – the local versus the universal, metaphor against simile – entailed wide cultural ramifications. By emphasizing particular places as *like* a city upon a hill, Protestants embraced an interpretation of Matthew 5:14 that might, in time, slip from an identification of individual churches or godly communions into towns and territories, then perhaps a nation, and maybe someday America itself. In other words, what many take to be the original rhetoric of American exceptionalism – this language of America as a "city on a hill" – arises from a Protestant–Catholic debate about the visibility of the true church. America could become the "city on a hill" because of the way Protestants were forced to reinterpret and localize a verse that had been central to early modern Catholic apologetics.

Yet modern political usage of "city on a hill" reveals several curious twists on this old phrase. Even as politicians return to Winthrop for the origins of American exceptionalism, they often leave out the variability of visibility and the simile so central to Protestant interpretations. Politicians, we know, will twist a phrase to fit their purposes, but what many do not notice is how much meaning depends on whether "city on a hill" serves as a metaphor or simile. For many Puritans, the people of New England were *like* a city on hill. When politicians claim that the United States just *is* the city on a hill, therefore, they shy away from the Protestant reinterpretation of Matthew 5:14 and edge closer to the Catholic meaning of the phrase. As with the Catholic Church of the seventeenth century, so in modern American rhetoric the United States remains forever the perpetual city.

If politicians proclaim that the United States is an exclusive and exceptional city on a hill – as Catholics claimed of the Roman Catholic Church – then protesting that city comes under increased scrutiny and can even be thought of as a kind of heresy. With their tradition of variable visibility based in Luke 12:32 and Revelations 12, Protestants often validated dissent, sometimes to their own dismay. Given the Catholic interpretation of Matthew 5:14, they had to rewrite history in order to turn supposed heretics, protestors, and dissenters from the past thousand years into martyrs and saints, the "little flock" waiting for a day when it might shine like a "city on a hill." Finally, if politicians speak of the United States as the *one and only* city on a hill, then such a claim makes no room for good models elsewhere, contrary again to the Puritan idea that wherever godliness appeared it functioned like a city on a hill.[35] As this phrase shifted in geographical scale, therefore, from a scattered set of communities in England and Holland to New England alone and finally to the United States standing by itself, the localized Protestant usage of Matthew 5:14 has gradually transformed back into the more universal Catholic meaning of a singular and exceptional truth, applied now to a nation, not a church.

No modern politician has used the phrase "city on a hill" more than President Ronald Reagan, and it is no surprise that in the final moments of his 1989 farewell address he returned to this image again. But Reagan did more than invoke it; he also, in a way, asked us to study it. Urging "thoughtfulness and knowledge," he proclaimed, "We've got to teach history based not on what's in fashion, but what's important," including first and foremost "why the Pilgrims came." As his speech turns to history, it fills with returns – "recovery, "rediscovery," "rebuilding," and so on – all of which lead finally to Reagan's charge that the American people must "remember our first principles and believe in ourselves." Reagan ties his speech to Winthrop's, and he uses that connection to draw a continuous trajectory of America serving forever as a beacon of freedom. Such rhetoric has become possible only because Winthrop and other "Pilgrims" localized the "city on a hill" from Matthew 5:14, and they localized it only because Catholics had already claimed its universal meaning. Contesting Roman Catholic claims to truth by likening particular godly places to cities on a hill, Puritans opened the way for one such place to eventually declare itself the solitary "city" standing "strong and true on the granite ridge" as "a magnet for all who must have freedom, for all the pilgrims from all the lost places who are hurtling through the darkness, toward home."[36] It takes a seventeenth-century Protestant–Catholic theological debate about the marks of the true church to make that twentieth-century claim about a country.[37]

Notes

1. Leonard Pollard, *Fyve Homiles of Late* (London, 1556), page numbers and printer's signatures obscured.
2. James Sharpe, *The Triall of the Protestant Private Spirit* (1630), 177 (italics in original).
3. John Abbot, *Iesus Praefigured, or, A Poëme of the Holy Name of Iesus in Five Bookes* (1623), 60.
4. L.D., *A Defence of the Appendix* (1624), 30 (italics in original). As this same Catholic apologist summarized: "*The Church that is Catholike as it ought to be, or the Church whose fayth is Eternall, or the Church of Christ and his Apostles, must be able to name Successors in all Ages. But the Protestant Church is not able to name the Professors of their Fayth, nor the Successors therein, to Christ and his Apostles in all Ages*. Ergo, *the Protestant Church is not Catholike as it ought to be, nor the Church whose Fayth is eternall, nor the Church of Christ and his Apostles*." L.D., *A Defence of the Appendix*, 20.
5. *Holy Churches Complaint, for Her Childrens Disobedience* (1600), A4v; Samuel Hieron, *An Answere to a Popish Ryme* (London, 1604); see also John Rhodes, *An Answere to a Romish Rime* (London, 1602), 6.
6. John Lightfoot, *Some Genuine Remains of the Late Pious and Learned John Lightfoot, D.D.* (London, 1700), 244.
7. Sir Humphrey Lynde, *Via Devia: The By-Way* (London, 1630), 327–328.
8. Alexander Ross, *Pansebeia, or, A View of All Religions in the World* (London 1655), 437–438.
9. Sir Humphrey Lynde, *Via Tuta: The Safe Way* (London, 1628), 292, 305 (emphasis in original). This entire treatise concerns the relation of truth to the visible church.
10. Lynde, *Via Devia*, "Epistle Dedicatorie" (no page numbers or printer's signatures in the preface). See also p. 619.
11. Thomas Taylor, *Christs Victorie over the Dragon* (London, 1633), 295.
12. John Prime, *An Exposition and Observations upon St Paul to the Galatians* (London, 1587), 220, 223–224. In fact, as Bozeman has shown, this claim to be the "little flock" could be used by dissenters of all sorts against the larger, established church, including the Puritans against the Church of England. Even in the 1570s and 1580s, he writes, "the godly chose and indeed accented and savored a minority status within their church and town," so that godly clergy often called themselves "a 'very smal' presence, 'a smal, poore . . . flocke'." Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *The Precisianist Strain: Disciplinary Religion and Antinomian Backlash in Puritanism to 1638* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 53.
13. Hieron, *An Answere to a Popish Ryme*, C3r.
14. Lynde, *Via Devia*, "Epistle Dedicatorie" (no page number or printer's signature in the preface), 672–673 (italics in original).
15. Taylor, *Christs Victorie*, 296. Taylor repeated this point throughout his treatise.

16. George Abbot, *A Treatise of the Perpetuall Visibilitie, and Succession of the True Church in All Ages* (London, 1624), A3v, 16–17.
17. This gendering of the "true" church as feminine, both here and by comparing the true church to the cycles of the moon, raises possibilities for a further examination of gender and Protestantism. Scholars have shown how often Puritan spirituality assumed a feminine position for the saved soul, but I do not know of examinations on the Puritan or Reformed gendering of the true church as a collective whole. When most scholars discuss the church as "the bride of Christ," they focus on the individual elect soul, but what were the ramifications of a wider gendering – a whole church community – in Reformed circles? That topic lies beyond the scope of my discussion, but good starting points would include the following: Amanda Porterfield, *Female Piety in Puritan New England: The Emergence of Religious Humanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Ivy Schweitzer, *The Work of Self-Representation: Lyric Poetry in Colonial New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Marilyn Westerkamp, *Women and Religion in Early America, 1600–1850: The Puritan and Evangelical Traditions* (New York: Routledge, 1999); and Diane Willen, "Godly Women in Early Modern England: Puritanism and Gender," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 43 (1992), 561–580.
18. Prime, *Exposition*, 227.
19. Rhodes, *An Answere to a Romish Rime*, 6.
20. Hieron, *An Answere to a Popish Ryme*, C3r.
21. Abbot, *Treatise of the Perpetuall Visibilitie*, 23–24.
22. Lynde, *Via Devia*, "Epistle Dedicatorie" (no page number or printer's signature).
23. This point is best expressed and explained in Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *To Live Ancient Lives: The Primitivist Dimension in Puritanism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).
24. Lynde, *Via Tuta*, A2v–A2r (italics in original).
25. Abbot, *Treatise of the Perpetuall Visibilitie*, A2r–A3v.
26. John Owen, *A Vindication of the Animadversions on Fiat Lux* (London, 1664), 382.
27. Andrew Delbanco, *The Puritan Ordeal* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 72. See also Darrett Rutman, *Winthrop's Boston: A Portrait of a Puritan Town, 1630–1649* (rpt. New York: Norton, 1972), chapter 1; Andrew Delbanco, "The Puritan Errand Re-Viewed," *Journal of American Studies* 18 (1984), 343–360; Theodore Dwight Bozeman, "The Puritans' 'Errand into the Wilderness' Reconsidered," *New England Quarterly* 59 (1986), 231–251; and Joseph Conforti, *Saints and Strangers: New England in British North America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 40–43.
28. See Avihu Zakai, *Exile and Kingdom: History and Apocalypse in the Puritan Migration to America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 143–144.

29. See Bozeman, "The Puritans' 'Errand into the Wilderness' Reconsidered," 240.
30. John Winthrop, "A Modell of Christian Charity," in *The Founding of Massachusetts: Historians and the Sources*, ed. Edmund Morgan (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), 201, 203.
31. Thomas Reeve, *The Churches Hazard* (London, 1632), 5–6, 20.
32. "[W]ee shall finde that the God of Israell is among us," Winthrop preached, "when tenn of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies, when hee shall make us a prayse and glory, that men shall say of succeeding plantacions: the lord make it like that of New England: for wee must Consider that wee shall be as a Citty upon a Hill." Winthrop, "Modell," 203.
33. Francis Bremer, "To Live Exemplary Lives: Puritans and Puritan Communities as Lofty Lights," *The Seventeenth Century* 7.1 (1992): 27–39 (quote, 37).
34. Wilkinson, qtd. in Bremer, "To Live Exemplary Lives," 30.
35. Bremer traces the change from New England as *a* city on a hill to *the* city on a hill in the seventeenth century; see "To Live Exemplary Lives."
36. Ronald Reagan, "Farewell Address to the Nation" (January 11, 1989). www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29650, accessed September 19, 2014. Gamble offers a good historical account of how this biblical phrase became a political slogan for America, but he does not discuss the Catholic–Protestant debate about Matthew 5:14. See Richard Gamble, *In Search of the City on a Hill: The Making and Unmaking of an American Myth* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012).
37. For a broader history of Winthrop's sermon – especially its appropriation by Perry Miller – see Abram C. Van Engen, "Origins and Last Farewells: Bible Wars, Textual Form, and the Making of American History," *New England Quarterly* 86 (2013), 543–592.

CHAPTER 14

Afterword: " . . . And American Literature"

Bryce Traister

In some quarters, the only thing that may be worse than continuing with "Puritan Studies" is linking it to an equally troubling term: "American Literature." "American Literature," for its part, identifies a narrative of literary and critical historiography whose coherence can no longer easily be assumed. As we saw in the Introduction, Puritanism and its study inaugurate a national origins story that reads Puritanism as the backstory to "American Literature." Indeed, according to a prominent line of argument, American Literature is an exhausted term with a dubious history. In fact, as with the idea of a singular Puritanism exerting a controlling force over national development, "American Literature" doesn't actually exist, other than as a nationalist fantasy or as a fiction designed to consolidate nationalist politics.[1] Yet here we are, on the business end of a book whose title, *American Literature and the New Puritan Studies*, implicitly asserts both the currency and the connection between these concepts. So how does the New Puritan Studies deliver us to the doorstep of American Literature?

For many years, colonial New England Puritan studies – typically known as "American Puritanism" – assumed a certain continuity with everything that came after: "from colony to province," to borrow one well-known phrase; from evangelicalism to democracy; from liberty of conscience to political liberty; from dissent to consent; and so on. According to William Spengemann, all of these claims for thematic continuity between the colonial ("Early American") and the national ("American") are specious in the extreme, grounded in "the wishful thinking and largely political designs of certain nineteenth-century patriots and twentieth-century English professors" to have an objective case for a distinctive "Americanness" and so a case for disciplinary credibility.[2] Admittedly, Spengemann is speaking broadly to the configuration of a specifically literary model of early American scholarship, but the argument can be extended to the "Puritan origins" thesis easily enough. Neither "Early American Literature" nor the "Puritan Origins" theory could be said in

any empirical sense to anticipate, create, frame, or ground the emergence of a national literature in the nineteenth century or beyond. All such claims for continuity amount to little more than a patriotic ambition or self-privileging professional defense that imagines an object of study into a disciplinary coherence dependent on a historiography itself propped up on flimsy and vague beliefs about continuity.

Equal parts assumption and argument, these grand narratives together make the case for continuity from colonial to national identity, a case that implies a host of questionable continuities as part of the deal: that colonial religious culture was a kind of "pre-national literature"; that the dissenting style of New England theology defined and anchored a uniquely American revolutionary consciousness; that the radical Reformation's "freedom from" polemic emerged in the nineteenth-century as the "freedom to" tendencies of liberalism. Considered as such, these continuity arguments have all been taken apart, in the wake of Foucault and the revisionist intellectual historiography his critique of progressive modernity has spawned, and replaced with a historiography of the discontinuous. New England Puritanism no more "leads into," anticipates, or defines "American literature" than the captivated femininity of Mary Rowlandson defines the terms of Stowe's sentimental domesticity or the densely metaphoric lyricism of Edward Taylor predetermines the neo-classical devotionalism of Phyllis Wheatley. We no longer believe in that kind of thing anymore. Whatever New England Puritanism was, according to post-continuity Americanist scholarship, it was not "pre-America."

Wilson Brisset puts the matter this way:

> At stake is not only the persistence of an ideologically driven white Protestant account of American history but also the long history of forcing them into protonationlist narratives that are alien to their cultural and theological milieu … continuity treatments of the tradition have tended not only to underwrite American literature with a white Protestant account of its sources … but they have also tended to subsume those strongly religious sources within later, secularizing developments.[3]

In addition to the continuity fictions of literary history, we have been practicing another: projecting essentially secular beliefs and dispositions backward into our past, and calling them a religious origins story grounded in the colonial Puritan experience. In this respect, it is worth observing, with several of our contributors here, that continuity arguments always go both ways, and they frequently contain elements that are peripheral, if not more directly resistant, to the broader continuity claims that deliver them.

Thus, the statues of prominent Boston settlers, as Jonathan Beecher Field demonstrates, exist uneasily within the familiar Puritan-commemoration narratives, and even make possible the recovery of municipal political, immigration, and even art histories conventionally ignored by the critique of the "Puritan origins" theory. These statues, themselves post-Puritan monuments to a complex Puritan past, draw us into a new critical perspective on how the past remembers its past, and what that reflective relationship tells us about our present day as well. Indigenous storytelling and trickster practices coordinate and influence Puritan hagiography, as Betty Booth Donohue tells it, thereby inviting us to reconsider what we thought we knew about English–Native relations during early settlement colonialism. In Michael Schuldiner's handling of those notoriously unfunny Puritans, a case for a populist theology of invitational Christianity emerges years before Jonathan Edwards began tracking an emotionally grounded spiritual excitement that would become the "Great Awakening." The "City on the Hill," as Abram van Engen shows us, turns out to have a history that is all but hostile to the term's appropriation, in modern political life, as the basis for a consensus nationalism grounded in Protestant exceptionalism. What happens to "our" Puritans when they return to us in forms that are, in certain crucial respects, unrecognizable according to our conventional narratives?

Among other things, we need to think seriously about revising some of those stories. Although the post-continuity perspective rightfully questions the nationalist tendencies of traditional American cultural and literary history, a Puritan past that is more subtle, more complex, and more heterogeneous might solicit a return to continuity between the colonial and post-national fields. One such area of continuity, as suggested in this book's Introduction, is through the new secular studies model. Brice Peterson's analysis of Cotton Mather's attitude toward the pregnant female body establishes a continuity between pre-modern and modern understandings of obstetrical knowledge. We now have a Cotton Mather who is quite different from Nathaniel Hawthorne's or Arthur Miller's version. Taken together, they suggest the conventional narrative of Hawthorne's bitterness toward Puritan "superstition" needs some updating as well. If it is true, as Michael Ditmore tells it, that nineteenth-century antiquarianism and history-assisted nationalism turned the previously ignored texts of John Winthrop and William Bradford into the "foundational" documents of the Puritan origins thesis par excellence, then the problem is less with an uncritical continuity between colonial and national Americas than with our contemporary capacity to understand a continuity that doesn't depend

on a facile or inaccurate set of historiographical assumptions. If our "American Literature" depends on such assumptions, then of course the inveterate nationalism of white Protestant America is going to continue claiming the old Puritanism as cultural foundation and political license. But when that Puritanism includes, for example, a surprisingly tolerant ecumenicalism in the millenarian ambition of Nan Goodman's Cotton Mather, or an unlikely continuity, following Paul Downes, between Puritan salvation theory and contemporary human rights discourse, then the problem is not the Puritans or the idea that Puritanism might still matter for studying American literature and culture today.

The problem, rather, is that we have become more narrow-minded and self-regarding than we think the Puritans were. It is hopefully clear at this point that, according to this book's contents, there are no fewer than twelve different "Puritanisms" to be found in the contemporary view of the field. In addition to those mentioned above, there is: a Puritanism attempting to engage with maritime lawlessness on the eve of oceanic empire (Jason Payton); a Puritanism existing in uneasy relation to the linguistics of Catholic empire and native anti-colonialism (Allison Bigelow); or a Puritanism in which a sumptuous cosmopolitan pre-eminence appears in the same picture as Puritan asceticism (Linda Johnson). In the New Puritan Studies, it is not self-evident that what New England Puritanism was – as a theology, as cultural practice, as social formation, as political movement – is at all one and the same as what our modern use of the term "Puritanism" implies. With a more expansive view of colonial Puritanism, we can now think clearly and determinedly about the idea of twelve or more American Literatures.

Notes

1. For one widely read critique along these lines, see Wai Chee Dimock, *Through Other Continents: American Literature Across Deep Time* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).
2. William Spengemann, *A New World of Words: Redefining Early American Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 33.
3. Wilson Brisset, "Jonathan Edwards, Continuity, and Secularism," *Early American Literature* 47 (2012): 172, 173.

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